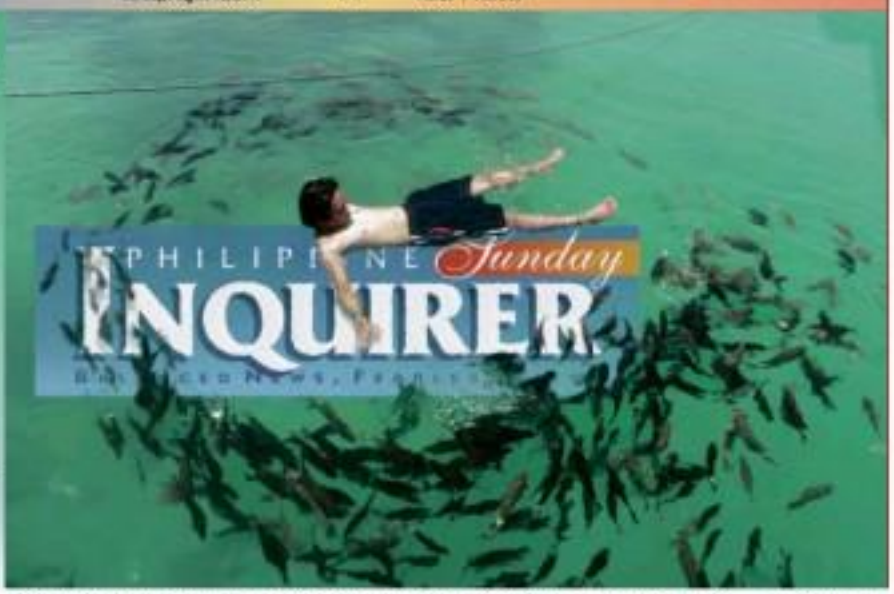
Sunday, August 15, 2010 ★★ Vol. 25 / No. 240

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **P775M released** for gov't pay hike • Dapitan not all about history, seafood treats ACROSS THE NATION • **Basic education:** How to go from 10 to 12 years TALK / A12 • **Lessons** in courage in Baton Rouge GLOBAL PINOY / A19 • **'Cats' actors** try on Filipino designs • After 30 years, back to diving in Malahibong Manok and Bonito Islands SUNDAY LIFESTYLE • **Union of batchoy** and inasal creates a business boom SUNDAY BIZ • **US actor** in Pinoy-made movie here on 'spiritual journey' ENTERTAINMENT



RING OF SERENITY On a clear day, in the serene waters of a fish sanctuary in Matnog, Sorsogon, a man communes with his fenced friends.

'Let Luisita folk decide'

Bishop says farmers' choice should be respected

By Philip C. Tubeza and Leila B. Salaverria

THE DECISION of the farmers of Hacienda Luisita to choose shares of stock instead of land should be respected because it is they who are suffering from the hardships brought by the labor problems afflicting the controversial sugar plantation, according to the Catholic bishop of Tarlac.

In an interview with the Church-run Radio Veritas, Bishop Florentino Cinense, whose flock includes the farmers of Luisita, said the latter's choice should also be respected because the land being offered to them—1,400 hectares of the 6,500-hectare plantation owned and managed by the family of President Aquino—was too small.

Asked what he would advise the farmers to choose, Cinense said it was clear that they were willing to settle for a compromise.

"If that is what they want, what can we do?" he said. "Their problem is that they want jobs. They've been out of work for three or four years, so they're really hard-pressed."

Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI) reached last week a settlement agreement with the farmers that gave them the choice of retaining their shares in the company under the stock distribution option (SDO) or giving these up for land.

Of the 10,502 farmer-beneficiaries, 7,441 (or 70.85 percent) signed the compromise agreement. Of that number, 7,302 chose the SDO, and 139, their own land.

On Aug. 11, HLI asked the Supreme Court to approve the settlement agreement and to dismiss a pending case over the validity of the SDO, which HLI had earlier offered the farmers in lieu

LET LUISITA / A4

Sereno: 'Triumph of intellect over shabby politics'

By Norman Bordadora and Nikko Dizon

NEWLY APPOINTED Supreme Court Associate Justice Maria Lourdes Arunal-Sereno may well become the country's first female Chief Justice, according to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago who hailed President Aquino for choosing Sereno whom she described as "brilliant."

Sereno, nicknamed "Mellon," is only 56 and could serve the Supreme Court for another 20 years before she reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70.

She is the youngest Supreme Court magistrate after Justice Cesar Bengzon who was 46 when he was appointed in 1945.

"It is fortuitous that she was appointed very young. She will earn the necessary seniority and eventually become the first female Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court," said Santiago, who herself tried to become the country's first female Chief Justice some years ago.

The senator said the appointment of Sereno, an expert in international law, was "a triumph of superior intellect over shabby politics."

"I admire President Aquino for his impartiality and preference for intellectual merit," Santiago said.

She said it was "remarkable" for Mr.

SERENO / A5

'4 witches' of Noynoy counting the days to 2016

By Fe Zamora

AMID CRITICISMS branding them as "witches," the four sisters of President Aquino have started a countdown to the day when their only brother finishes his six-year term, Viel A. Dee said yesterday.

"We have started our countdown ... now it's 70 months to go," Viel, one of the Aquino sisters, told the hopefuls at the unveiling of the Precious Moments patrolair, Impo figurine of her late mother, former President Corazon Aquino, at Greenhills 3 in Makati City.

Viel said they had already started "our countdown to 2016" as a way of reminding themselves that the criticisms would end when their only brother, who is a bachelor, steps down on June 30, 2016.

"We thought this is just six years, so how many days? How many weeks? But counting days and weeks seems too long. So we decided to count the months ... 70 months to go. Sounds better," Viel said.

President Aquino is known to con-

4 WITCHES / A6

CANDY Gourlay

Tall Story: Tale of 2 siblings, 2 cultures

By Ruel S. de Vera

LIKE A BASKETBALL crisply and accurately passed from one end of the hard court to the other, Candy Quiroga Gourlay's novel for young adults, "Tall Story" covers a great distance with just a single toss. It's a fantastic first novel and a full-court press of friendly fiction.

Originally published in London, "Tall Story" is about a set of mismatched siblings separated by time and oceans. Basketball-crazy Andi Hipolito Jones, who is 13 and half Filipino, wants nothing more than to be the point guard for her school team even if she's the smallest in her grade and London, where she lives, is no hoops hotspot.

Then, one day her half-brother from a small town in the Philippines arrives, after 16 years of waiting. There's just one thing about Bernardo that's different. "Bernardo is a giant," Andi says. To the Jones family's surprise, they discover that Bernardo is eight feet tall.

Bernardo has finally made it to London from the hamlet of San Andres where the superstitious locals consider him to be a magical creature—a version of the mythical giant Bernardo Carpio—and are afraid that the earthquakes that used to plague

TALL STORY / A15

Volunteerism can help gov't recover, for free

By John L. Silva
Contributor

WHAT TO DO with the idealistic young aged under 30 who overwhelmingly chose Benigno Aquino III to be the President of the Philippines?

They belong to a formidable group numbering about 20 million and comprising almost half of the eligible voting population. (The Commission on Elections figured that for the May 2010 elections alone, there were almost two million voters who turned 18 and voted for the first time.)

Taking a leaf from the 2008 American elections with Barack Obama drawing the youth vote and clinching the presidency, let's examine and learn how he has channeled that postelection victory.

He put the young people back to

VOLUNTEERISM / A6

BARANGAY POWER Young and old voters throng the Comelec office in Arroceros, Manila, on Saturday to register for the barangay elections. Today is the last day of registration.

Cockpit 'kristo' going to memory Olympics

By Nina Calleja

A FORMER "kristo" or bet taker in a cockfighting arena and a registered nurse are set to wow the world with their mental skills when they compete at the UK Open International Memory Championships in London on Aug. 26 to 27.

Robert Hacasa, 33, and Johann Hanziah Abrina, 29, amazed reporters during a news conference at the Mandaluyong City Hall yesterday when they correctly memorized the sequence of a freshly shuffled deck of cards, as well as 10 sets of binary digits in less than a minute.

It's not a super power. It's a new sport called mental gymnastics. Hacasa and Abrina said with the use of visualization techniques, they could memo-

COCKPIT / A11

WEATHER FORECAST

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Batangas City	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo	Partly Cloudy
Cabanatuan	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	San Carlos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Butuan	Mostly Cloudy

Second
FRONTPAGE

EZ2
2D 20 15
3D 2 8
6/42 13 38

SUERTRES
2PM 4 3 2
5PM 9 6 4
9PM 4 7 7

SIX (58)
7 4 1 7 2 9

4-D KRUZ-VIC-MIN
7 20 23 26 31 39
P11,888,586.00

6/55 GRAND LOTTO
13 18 29 37 53 54
P99,412,171.20

'Toll tax mess Aquino Cabinet's fault'

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE SUPREME COURT'S order stopping Malacañang from collecting higher toll fees is a case of the Cabinet failing to do its homework, said Elena Bautista-Horn, spokesperson of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Malacañang should have done [completed] staff work before hastily implementing the value-added tax (VAT) on the toll," said Horn.

"It's not good...to blame the past administration for the failure of the present administration to do its homework," said Horn in a text message to reporters.

Reacting to the temporary restraining order issued Friday by the high court on the implementation of the tax on toll fees, Palace officials said the Aquino administration was merely enforcing a law that was passed during the Arroyo administration.

But presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said the Palace respected the court's decision.

Lacierda said the law was already in existence in 2005, and that two revenue measures that members were issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue in 2005 and 2009, but "the Arroyo administration failed to enforce its own orders."

Horn recalled that then President Arroyo had considered the idea as well, but shelved it after she decided it would add an undue burden on motorists and commuters. There were also pending questions on the legality of collecting VAT from toll road users.

"The Arroyo administration did not implement the VAT on toll because of issues raised in the Senate, and because the reduction in the rapid, inclusive and operational issues had not been found when overtaken by the change of administration," said Horn.

Administration's unfair style

She said Arroyo had considered the "impact of the VAT" on those using toll roads in refusing to implement the law.

"She saw that it would have had a huge effect on the people, so she ordered a re-study [of the law]," said Horn.

"But what's new? We [in the opposition] should be used to the Aquino administration's style of unfairly accusing and judging [the past administration] even before studying the data and issues involved," she said.

Meanwhile, Albay Gov. Joey S. Salceda lauded the Supreme Court for stopping the TRB and other MIF entities as well as the 256-percent toll rate increase at the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX.)

Petition cited by SC

"It was our petition. Hindi nasabi [it was not mentioned] by the SC in granting the issuance of a TRO," Salceda said in a text message on Saturday.

He said the SC also ordered the consolidation of his petition with another pending petition.

Salceda said his petition pointed out that "with the legislator itself a party to the toll hike...there were no concrete acts to escape the SC by petition against an imminent abuse."

In June, he had asked the SC to stop the SLEx's planned toll fee hike, saying that toll fees could not be increased without a public hearing or approval by law. It cannot be done by mere contract between the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) and its contracting parties through the Supplemental Toll Operation Agreement (STOA), he said.

Under the STOA, the South Luzon Tollways Corp. (SLTC), which holds a 25-year concession on the 30-kilometer SLEx, was scheduled to raise toll rates by 25.8 percent beginning 12:01 a.m. on June 30. That was moved to July 7 in deference to the inauguration of President Aquino.

While the 256-percent increase, private passenger vehicles would be paying P2.75 per km over the current 62 centavos per km.

Salceda said that under PD 1113, the toll agency's authority is only to enter into contracts in behalf of the Republic of the Philippines regarding the design, operation, construction and maintenance of toll facilities.

Abuse of discretion

"Clearly, the TRB has committed a grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction when it entered into a contract which includes, as part of its contractual provisions, the determination and fixing of toll rates, including its increase, in clear violation of its express and limited authority under PD 1113," he said. With a report from Abac T. Arguelles, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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Noynoy: RP on road to change

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Aquino has indicated, through anecdotes that he shared with local airport, maintenance and others in Malacañang on Friday, that the country was slowly on the road to a social transformation.

Just as a traffic enforcer of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority had cited his kid sister Kris Aquino's driver for a parking violation, Mr. Aquino said he received a text message showing that MMDA traffic aides may no longer be on the take.

"Someone texted me the other day [he wanted to see the MMDA, he said] his son that was banned on the road that day because of the number ending. He sent me and he tried to talk to the traffic enforcer," the President narrated.

"He was told, 'We very well know that we are now on a different path. We can't do that,'" said Mr. Aquino in a speech before officers of the Organisasyon ng mga Pilipinong Ming sawit (OPM) on Friday afternoon.

The President said he had also received a report that examinees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue were no longer dropping bars to those having their tax obligations assessed that they could pay a smaller sum in exchange for a bribe.

"There was a report yesterday that the 300 examinees are no longer dropping bars before and after they examine taxpayers' documents. They just go about their business of examining papers and that is the good news," Mr. Aquino said.

The President said the MMDA men was also addressing the problem of flooding in the metropolis.

"I check on those takeovers [it rains] and they report to me how many inches of flood there are," Mr. Aquino said.

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Music soothes Aquino, who orders airing of Pinoy hits

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT AQUINO has ordered the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) to strictly implement what appears to be a forgotten executive order directing radio stations to air at least four Filipino songs every hour on their music properties.

Mr. Aquino ordered the NTC to review compliance with Executive Order No. 255 and see to its strict implementation. He made the announcement before officers of the Organizational-ng mga Pilipinong Mang-aawit (OPM) on Friday afternoon.

Mr. Aquino administered the oath of office to the new OPM officers led by his friend Sigit Akmad, president, and Mitch Valdez, chair, in Malacañang.

Other officers who were sworn in were executive director Ruben Bagaso, vice president for external affairs Gary Valenciano, vice president for internal affairs Noel Cabangon, vice president for special projects Christian Bautista, treasurer Jose Mari Chan, secretary Dingdong Avanzado, and ex-officio trustees Jim Paredes and Celeste Legaspi-Gallardo.

"I am directing the head of the Presidential Management Staff to call up the Department of Transportation and Communications and remind the NTC to fully implement the existing executive order as soon as possible," the President said in his speech before the artists.

EO 255, or the order "Requiring all Radio Stations with Musical Format Programs to Broadcast at a Minimum of Four Original Pilipino Musical Compositions in Every One-Hour and for Other Purposes," was issued by the President's mother, the late former President Corazon Aquino, in July 1987.

The OPM lamented that the directive was no longer being strictly followed in the airwaves of the burgeoning industry.

In his speech, President Aquino recalled that when he was a young man in the late 1970s and early '80s, his family—particularly his martyred father, Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.—turned to music of people like Colette Legaspi and Jose Mari Chan to lift their spirits amid the dark days of the Marcos dictatorship.

As a 50-year-old presidential aspirant, he said, he himself turned to music whenever doubt entered his mind about the preponderance of his campaign machinery and about his readiness to serve as president.

"Honestly, when I accepted the challenge, I asked myself, 'What am I getting into?' Yes, we are not ready and your opponents are all quite prepared. If they don't find any fault with you, they'll just make up something," Mr. Aquino said.

The President referred to Regine Velasquez's "Hindi Ka Nag-Iisa" composed by Jim Paredes, Atienza.

"Nung unang 'Hindi Ka Nag-Iisa,' from its very first time, really lifts up one's feelings. Perhaps, I'm really not alone here. Because of this, thank you very much," Mr. Aquino told Atienza and Velasquez.

"What is the cost of marriage? Music can really be inviting. If you're down and hopeless, the situation can be brought back to life, that one can again hope, dream and move forward," Mr. Aquino said.

"[The art of music and song] really has a huge power. It can be used for good. It can also be used to convince that's not right," he added.

The President said that when his father was detained at Fort Bonifacio under the martial law regime in the 1970s, Legaspi's "Sumaggila ni Pepe" gave him hope that these dark days would eventually end.

"[His] song le-

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MAJIMA

Scrap DENR, urges environmentalist

By Alex Pal
Inquirer Visayas

ILIMAGUITE CITY—Environmental lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr. has called for the abolishment of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), stating it is suffering from "institutional schizophrenia."

Oposa, a pioneer in the study of environmental law in the Philippines and considered one of Asia's leading voices in international environmental law, said the DENR was schizophrenic because it had two conflicting functions.

He said the agency found itself in a constant dilemma between conservation and mining utilization.

"Conservation has an enemy. Mining has names. So, it is debate, guess who wins?" said Oposa, a Ramon Magsaysay Award laureate for 2009.

He said trying to fulfill its mandate was a highly difficult task for the DENR.

"Show me a mining company that has been closed down because of pollution because enforcement is always come, because mining has money," he said.

Oposa said the idea of fusing the functions of environmental protection and natural resource utilization may have been good in the beginning, but in the end, "you cannot have a person who is thrifty and at the same time is an addicted gambler."

"You have in the department people who are thrifty for conservation, yet you have the threat of the same department where people who are gambling irresponsibly and irreversibly on the natural wealth of the country. You cannot have that. You will have Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," he said.

Oposa was here Thursday to attend a meeting on Preserved Area Management Effectiveness at Silliman University, organized by the Dr. Jorge Saburon Center for Law and Development and the German Development Service.

He said he had actually talked to some senators about his proposal to abolish the DENR and had obtained the support of Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri. The latter has filed a bill to abolish the DENR and create two separate agencies for conservation and mineral utilization.

He has yet to hear of a similar bill filed in the House of Representatives.

In place of the DENR, Oposa proposes to put up a National Environmental Protection Agency as a separate office from the Department of Natural Resources which will deal with the utilization of natural resources.

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Drugs board has ₱12M coming

By Lolibeth Saluevris

THERE'S P12 million windfall just waiting to be grabbed by the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

The Commission on Audit (COA) has directed the DDB to pick up its share of confiscated and forfeited unexpended and lotto prizes from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), which is to be used for its anti-illegal drug activities.

The COA issued that order the law, the DDB is entitled to 10 percent of all confiscated and forfeited unexpended and lotto prizes per year, but the amount should not be less than P12 million. The money is to be placed in a special account in the general fund for the implementation of Republic Act No. 9165 or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

The DDB failed to collect the money in 2009, according to the COA.

The COA noted, however, that the DDB had seen collection letters to the PCSO, although it had not received a response by the time the audit was completed.

"We recommended and management agreed to make representations with the PCSO for the payment of its share of the unclaimed sweepstakes and lotto prizes but to be not less than P12,000,000 accruing to the board as mandated by RA 9165," it said in its report.

The DDB formulates policies and strategies to curb, prevent and control drug abuse. It oversees the national programs of various agencies and nongovernment organizations involving abuse prevention.

In its report, the COA also said that as of Dec. 31, 2009, P2,000 million in cash advances to DDB officers remained unliquidated.

Of this amount, P2 million was credited to former DDB chair and now Sen. Vicente Sotto for the agency's action center. The rest went to Renato Pineda and Virginia Salmeron, who each received just over P96,000.

The DDB has asked them to liquidate the funds.

"Management was directed to turn to the accountable officers concerned to liquidate their cash advances, otherwise, administrative sanctions may be imposed against them. The purpose for which the cash advances were granted had already been served, however, documentary requirements for liquidation were not submitted by yourself," the COA said.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, August 15, 2010
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
1st Reading: Rev 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab

Then the sanctuary of God in the heavens was opened, and the Ark of the Covenant of his could be seen inside the sanctuary. There were flashes of lightning, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a violent hailstorm.

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman, clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain, looking in her time of delivery. Then another sign appeared: a huge, red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and wearing seven crowns on its heads. It had just swept along a third of the stars in the sky and cast them to earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour the child as soon as it was born. She gave birth to a male child, the one who is to rule all the nations with an iron sceptre, and her child was caught up to God and to his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert where God had prepared a place for her; there she would be looked after for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:
Now has salvation come,
with the power and the kingdom of our God,
and the rule of his anointed.
For our brethren's accuser has been cast out,
who accused them night and day before God.

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 15:20-27

But no, Christ has been raised from the dead and he comes before all those who have fallen asleep. A human being brought death, a human being also brings resurrection of the dead. All die for being Adam's, and in Christ all will receive life, but all in their own time: first Christ, then Christ's people, when he comes.

Then the end will come, when Christ delivers the kingdom to God the Father, after having destroyed every rule, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed will be death. As Scripture says: God has subjected everything under his feet.

When we say that everything is put under his feet, we exclude, of course, the Power who subjects everything to him.

Gospel: LUKE 1:39-56

Mary then set out by a route in the hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said: "Of all women you are among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But what do I owe it of my Lord's mother to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what Lord's word would come true!"

And Mary said:
"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit exults in God my saviour
for he looked upon his servant in her lowliness;
and people from now on will call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,
Holy is his Name!
From age to age his mercy extends
to those who live in his presence.
He has used the power of his arm
and scattered the proud with their plans.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones
and lifted up those who are downtrodden.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the help of Israel, his servant,
for he remembered his mercy,
even as he promised our fathers,
Abraham and his descendants, forever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary:
"My soul is glad because of God my Savior, for he has remembered me, my lowly servant."

I have been called by God, just as surely as Mary was, to do my part in the plan of salvation.

Like Mary did, my soul recognizes that my call from God is not a personal one—it is one that is meant to be shared with others.

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Smart warns against hoaxes

DON'T DO dupes).

Smart Communications Inc. is again warning the public against those text messages seeking airtime load, money or personal information.

One basic message supposedly coming from family members abroad, asking the recipient to reload their "new" roaming number. Others, purportedly from Smart, concern a subscriber to "winning" cash or a car in a promo, or require the subscriber to register by texting his or her name and personal details to a regular cell phone number.

"As to our previous advisories, we urge our subscribers to ignore text messages from unknown cell phone numbers that ask for load or money or that promise rewards," said Smart Public Affairs head Ramon Isberto.

For instance, supposedly from Smart advising subscribers that they won in a promo or contest, letters said there were ways to open it here.

"When there's a promo or contest, Smart never asks customers to pay for their prizes. A valid and official letter or text message will never come from a three- or four-digit number, or a 'Smart' sender ID.

Subscribers may call the hotline at toll-free "888 from their cell phones or 8811111 from a landline to verify if they indeed won prizes from Smart. Or they may go to the nearest Smart business center to verify such text messages.

Amend Pagcor charter before sale, says solon

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—The charter of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) would have to be amended before it could be privatized, according to Negros Occidental Rep. Alfredo Abelardo Benitez.

"We have to see the parameters for privatization in the law to protect the interest of the government," Benitez said.

This would mean including a provision retaining the government's regulatory functions over Pagcor to ensure a continuous income for the government from the state-run gambling entity.

San Miguel Corp. vice chair Ramon S. Ang last week said the government could realize as much as P150 billion if it sold Pagcor, money that he said could give the country a big push in its economy.

Ang said that he himself would make a bid for Pagcor possibly with three Malaysian business tycoons. Robert Stark, Ananda Krishnan and Francis Yeoh for partners.

President Aquino said several legislators thought the proposed sale was worth considering.

Benitez said he favored the proposal to privatize Pagcor but only insofar as its operational assets were concerned. He said the government must retain its regulatory functions over Pagcor.

According to Benitez, Pagcor's charter was geared toward ensuring that all its earnings went to the government and its various programs.

Under the Pagcor charter, and other governing laws, five percent of the earnings goes to the Bureau of Internal Revenue in franchise tax, while 5% percent of the remaining 95 percent goes to the national government.

Of the remaining half of the 95 percent, five percent goes to the Philippine Sports Commission or Boxing Commission's developmental programs. One percent of the net cash income goes to the Board of Claims, an agency under the Department of Justice that compensates victims of wrongful detention and prosecution.

The rules barring Pagcor casinos also receive a fixed amount for their community development projects while the remaining balance of Pagcor's income is remitted to the President's Social Fund to help pay for priority projects.

The Pagcor charter also provides fixed amounts for the implementation of several laws like the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, among others.

Benitez stressed that the government had to retain its controlling interest in Pagcor.

He said the government would lose its ability to perpetually earn money if it agreed to sell Pagcor in one go.

He said the government would also go public and sell 49 percent of its shares to investors, which could be undertaken without a middleman.

Highly Praised
TOURS

Aquino warned against signing EO advocating 'open skies'

ADVOCATES of the "open skies" policy have **inflamed the highest echelons of the government** and will attempt to pressure President Aquino into signing an executive order giving foreign airlines unlimited access to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, Pampanga, and beyond.

This was the warning aired yesterday by Robert Lim Joseph, founder of the Fair Open Skies Movement, who said the open skies lobbyists had moved within the Aquino administration to pressure Mr. Aquino into signing Executive Order 500-E.

Joseph warned that officers of the Federation to Fly Coalition (FFC), which has been advocating for open skies without reciprocity, "may use their close now to push their agenda" in the administration.

He said Rustico Sermonia Alfonso Lim was one of the founders of FFC, which has been tagged in the Senate during public hearings as a lobbyist for foreign aviation interests.

Joseph feared that FFC, through Lim and other individuals and groups in government and the private sector would influence President Aquino into finally signing EO 500-E.

Get viewpoints of stakeholders

"Thus we are cautioning the President against signing EO 500-E. He should open to public discussion the merits of this proposed amendatory executive order, and get the viewpoints of other stakeholders in the aviation, travel and tourism industries," he said.

Joseph said EO 500-E would give outright and unlimited grant of traffic rights to all foreign airlines. These traffic rights include Fifth Freedom rights, which would allow, without limit, foreign airlines to fly to Clark, pick up local passengers, and fly them to a third country.

Under this set-up, Singapore Airlines, say, can fly to Clark, pick up Filipino passengers there, and fly them to the United States or Japan or Korea without limit on frequency and type of aircraft.

"The problem with the set-up is that **while we are generously allowing** foreign airlines these traffic rights, Philippine carriers do not enjoy the same privileges and rights as they have still to negotiate with the governments of these foreign airlines, Joseph said in a press statement.

Over EO 500-E in secret, Philippine carriers would lose their leverage during air negotiations. They cannot expect to get equal concessions from foreign governments since we had already given everything to their airlines on a silver platter, he said.

"Where is fairness in this arrangement?" Joseph said.

Corrections

IN THE AUGUST 14 ISSUE, a front-page news story, "Navy sees Sakkiayan' air return to exist trial"—misstated that the return of Rolando Navi's sister from the United States was cited in a motion to prescribe pretrial conference and preliminary hearing of Navi's graft case. It is the sister of Navi's lawyer...not Navi's sister—who is coming from the US.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a front-page story, "Navy valuable learner 'drowned' in tsunami"—misstated the Philippine Military Academy class to which Maj. Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr. belongs. Oban is a member of PMA Class of 1979—not 1978.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Inquirer, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PIE Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Rockwell Drive, Makati City, fax No. (02) 897-8703 or e-mail address inquirer@inquirer.com.ph.

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'Let Luisita folk decide'

From page A1

of land, and which the Department of Agrarian Reform Court affirmed recently.

The high court is to hear oral arguments on the case involving the SDO on Aug. 18.

On Aug. 12, PCI began distributing P20 million of the P150-million financial assistance package to be given to the farmers under the settlement. It said the balance of P130 million would be released if the high court approves the deal.

As it turned out, a number of farmers received amounts smaller than P180.

'Who force them?'

Noting that around 10,000 farmers would be sharing 1,400 hectares if all of the checks are paid, Llanesca said the small plots were not enough to ensure that they would be gainfully employed.

"If they are given one-fourth of a hectare, what can they do with it? That is why many of them, in silence and in private, say that it would be better to have the ARB, or get paid. That is what they said," the bishop said.

He also said the farmers' interests would even be "hurt" if the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program would be followed strictly to the letter.

"They are the ones who are affected. If we say 'since this is the law, you have to accept the law' that's okay, but they will be hurt. Who decided we have them and give them more hardships?" Llanesca said.

QUEUING UP FOR CASH. Farm workers of Lakidar wait for their share of the financial assistance package from the Cojuangco family. ALEX LIN

"I thought we wanted to help the farmers ... isn't it right that we should just let them be?" he said.

Llanesca said the farmers' chain of the land might even get smaller if the hacienda were partitioned because inadequacies in the land.

"The land will get smaller, and they don't have capital, so maybe that's what they're thinking. As for me who can't say their have to abide by the law if they're the ones suffering?" he added.

Farmers' petition

The fight against the compromise agreement is an unusual act the Supreme Court tomorrow, with farmers' unions prepared to ask the tribunal to expunge the deal from the records.

Johnry Bebilga, legal counsel of the Alyansa ng Mangagawang Bukid ng Hacienda Luisita, also said the unions would ask the high court to cite for contempt the ARC officers and those who misrepresented themselves as union officers for entering into a purportedly clean deal.

Bebilga said the compromise agreement must be withdrawn this week because it was an invalid deal.

He also said the abandonment of the P20 million even without the high court's approval of the settlement was a risk that ARC took because it was no guarantee that the tribunal would uphold the deal.

Bebilga had earlier said the compromise agreement was a sham because one of those who signed it on the farmers' behalf was not a real representative of the farmers' unions, and the other signatories were not involved in the CBA case.

He also claimed that the compromise agreement was "unlawful in totality the issue and presentation of any provision of the RDO case now pending with the Supreme Court."

Solidarity Mass

The Luisita farmers opposing the settlement deal and their sympathizers will attend a Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Teodoro Bacani on Aug. 17 at 5 p.m. at the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City.

"It will be a solidarity Mass. The homily will be for the farmers of Hacienda," said Ginoy Maghinang, media liaison officer of the militant group Bayang Ahunsang Makabayan.

After the Mass, candles will be lighted outside the church.

Maghinang said the farmers would then proceed to the Department of Agrarian Reform to hold a vigil as they wait for the oral arguments on the RDO case at the Supreme Court.

Earlyon Aug. 16, farmers and members of militant groups will converge at Plaza Salamanca in Manila before proceeding to the Supreme Court on Padre Faura Street, where they will continue to air their opposition to the SDO as well as the compromise agreement.

Some of the farmers intend to go with their lawyers inside the session hall to listen to the oral arguments, Maghinang said.

Volunteerism can help gov't recover, for free

From page A1

work—volunteer work.

Obama entered the presidential race with a distinctive resumé. He had a stint in community organizing in the poorer sections of Chicago with a salary that qualified him as a volunteer worker.

During the election campaign, with a financial meltdown and an economic crisis looming, his speeches in his audience had a very clear message: If I win, I'm not going to do this alone. I'm going to get you all doing service and exercising your citizenship.

Even before his inauguration, the American President declared Martin Luther King's birthday, an official holiday, a day of service, and, with his wife, drove to a nearby youth center to help paint and refurbish it.

Centerpiece

As President, Obama has made volunteerism the centerpiece of his administration.

One of his first bills that passed Congress was the Kennedy Service Act, which created new voluntary and service opportunities with a hefty $6-billion budget. Various local, state, private and government organizations and agencies with volunteerism as their thrust were encouraged to engage in a national effort to increase the number of volunteers, and widen their outreach work.

A year and a half after Obama's inauguration, with his foreign policy in Afghanistan increasingly unpopular, an economy still in the doldrums with even more layoffs in sight, a unemployable rate of 9%, and a record environment, his administration continues to shine in the area of volunteer service.

The Obama administration has a goal of 250,000 active volunteers by the year 2017. The character of volunteer service was upgraded, encompassing youth programs, job training and adding substitute teachers to the US' flagging educational system.

Large grants were given to innovative nonprofit organizations that showed results in the above areas. And the administration encouraged and tool up citizen participation to local and state issues to ensure that the programs were working.

As a result, the number of Americans volunteering in their communities in just **one year jumped by 1.6 million...the** largest increase in six years.

More than 63.4 million Americans volunteered, giving 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service worth an estimated $169 billion—a sum that the Obama administration would have been unable to muster from Congress.

Similarities

Many of the challenges that the United States faces and has now addressed through volunteerism are very similar to the Philippine reality.

A national volunteers service commission under the Aquino administration could include revitalizing a moribund Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA, which falls under the National Economic and Development Authority), installing dynamic leadership, and providing a decent start-up budget.

In turn, the PNVSCA can marshal the 24 private volunteers organizations and begin drawing up plans to develop a national volunteer strategy to coordinate and document as one force all volunteer efforts nationwide, similar to that being done by American Corps' centers for National and Community Services.

Target goals, including numbers of volunteers and hours of service, can be tracked and the peso equivalent can be counted and credited as an economic output.

What exponentially the young voting population of our country who, through their ballots, opted for change can continue to exercise their aspirations through meaningful volunteers service.

'Millennials'

The Philippines currently experienced very serious typhoon calamities, and record numbers performed unremunerated work to help the victims. Imagine if these same foreign lenders a hopeful administration can be channeled to do such every day and in every appropriate to help others.

The wider 30 population has been tagged as the "Millennials." In interviews and psychographic profiles, this group has swung from the previous "Me" generation to a force that seeks a purposefulness.

Using his own volunteer experience, Obama has adroitly translated his young voting constituents to become active citizens and help his country's economic recovery. It may also ensure his reelection in 2012.

With its near-empty coffers and the daunting challenges facing it, President Aquino's administration has a potential base of volunteers and goodwill that will, for free, hasten the country's economic recovery and leave a legacy of volunteerism among its citizenry when he vacates office.

John L. Allen is a creative of Manila. On March 2, private volunteer organization.

Noynoy resting in Luisita, but...

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT AQUINO traveled yesterday to the family-owned Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac to take a breather.

This was confirmed early last night by Col. Ramon Dizon, the commander of the Presidential Security Group.

"Yes, he is here. Magpapahinga ang po (He is just resting)," Dizon said in a text message.

A Palace insider said Mr. Aquino headed to Tarlac in the wee hours yesterday.

"That's the only place where he can really recharge," said the source, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to speak on the matter.

The source also said Mr. Aquino had no intention of touching base with any of the parties involved in the dispute now roiling the sugar plantation.

In an earlier exchange with reporters, Mr. Aquino said he attended a trip to Tarlac last weekend to avoid suspicion that he was meddling in the compromise agreement recently signed by the farmers and Hacienda Luisita Inc.

THE FOUR SISTERS of President Aquino, shown here during his inauguration, are counting down to 2016. It's just 70 months away.

'4 witches' of Noynoy counting days

From page A1

suit his sisters before making a decision or before signing a political appointment. The President's "dependence" on his sisters—"the four witches of Noynoy," as one critic has described them—was allegedly the main reason there were still many vacancies in government agencies.

Too fussy?

According to critics, the sisters were "too fussy" in going over the names and qualifications of the applicants, such that only those "already they know personally" would get appointed.

The said it's last elder sister, Ballsy Cruz, who seems to have taken a big role in the Aquino administration. "Sabi nga nila, si (They said Ballsy has become) 'The Duty,'" she said.

In a clay, Ballsy can shall be fussy representing the President in a meeting in Makati to heading PDP-gasem in a function in Malacañang. But Ballsy is no stranger to such activities, in the way also the private secretary of the first Aquino president, Jenny from 1986 to 1992.

At that time, Tito and they also had their "misadventures in 1990."

Behind the scenes

But there's a difference between the two presidencies, she noted.

"Then, we could effective just stay behind the scenes. We were not seen. Now, we really have to help any way we can," she said.

According to Tito, she only comes into the picture when neither her sisters Ballsy, Pinky Abellada or Kris Aquino/Bisp could make it...such as the unveiling of the portraits Bisp Ang at one of their mother designed, by American artist Samuel John Rueben.

Who will fill Cory's shoes?

The special edition figurine was planned for release on Aug. 3, in commemoration of the first death anniversary of the former President. But since none of the figurine sculptors could make it that day, the occasion was moved to Aug. 13.

Butaller, an American artist from Missouri who popularized the Precious Moments inspirational greeting cards, pottery and figurines, ran figurine in the '80s, happened with her sculpting. Butaller became an artistic contributor to the Aquino administration's "Kapit Bisig" charity program.

The Cory figurine shows a young girl looking at a shoe with the name Cory. Inscribed at the base are the words: "Who's gonna fill your shoes?"

Hindi solusyon ang abolisyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan.

Hindi solusyon ang abolisyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan
kung ang ninanais ay magkaroon ng direktang partisipasyon
sa gobyerno ang bagong henerasyon.
Mawawalan ng tiyak na lugar kung saan maaring tumindig at makiisa ang kabataan sa pagtataguyod ng bansa.

Hindi solusyon ang abolisyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan
kung ang usapin lamang ay ang kakulangan ng mga lokal
na pinunong nagmula sa konsehong ito.
Hindi na mabilang ang mga lider na nagsilbi sa gobyerno na nagsimula, natuto, at umusbong mula rito.

Hindi solusyon ang abolisyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan
kung ang kinukwestyon ay korupsyon at kakulangan
ng mga makabuluhang proyektong naisakatuparan.
Patunay ang matagumpay na mga programang naidaos ng grupo; Saksi mismo ang mga SK at mga kasapi.

Hindi solusyon ang abolisyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan.

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New policy does DPWH official in

By Mar S. Arguelles
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCBAN CITY—The director of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Aklan is reported to be in hot water for implementing an infrastructure project that did not follow the agency's standard operating procedures.

Danilo Mandalag, who is also an architect, converted the agency's covered basketball court into a two-story structure at a cost of P12.5 million, reportedly without going through the agency ECP.

His post against the policy directive of the new public works secretary, Rogelio Singson.

Immediately upon assuming office, Singson adopted a policy of transparency giving orders that employees strictly follow the ECP in the implementation of any infrastructure project, specifically in the bidding and awarding of such projects.

Mandalag explained that he carried out the conversion of the covered basketball court in order to decongest the regional office.

The new two-story structure, which was completed and inaugurated only recently, measures 500 square meters and contains the offices of the director, the office of the Aklan public works committee, and a dormitory on the second floor.

DPWH timekeeper said, however, that Mandalag failed to abide by the guidelines set by the agency.

The department's administrative, finance and audit offices have refused to process and approve the project vouchers because the project had no supporting documents and did not pass through the proper procedures.

For his part, Mandalag, in a press conference on Thursday, said the office improvement project was abandoned and was approved by DPWH Undersecretary Isabel Yabut.

He said Yabut allowed him to use P12.5 million from the engineering administration overhead funds, on condition that the project be implemented through a negotiated procurement and construction according to administration procedures.

When asked why he did not follow the ECP, Mandalag said the project construction phase had overtaken the process of obtaining the necessary papers and documents.

As a result, the project was finished before the documents could be obtained.

It's just that the construction surpassed the normal time of official documents and procedures, he said.

Mandalag said his conscience was clear and he was prepared to answer the charges against him.

"I'm ready for any sanctions that Secretary Singson may impose on me. So far it," he said.

He also claimed that the controversy was being stoked by a group that was out to destroy him and get him removed from office.

He refused to name names but hinted that a politician was behind it all.

Mandalag said his critics wanted to use the P12.5 million for dredging projects instead of the office improvement project that he pursued.

He said it is a matter of public knowledge that a dredging project does not derive any purpose but to make money for the proponents.

Post transactions online, LGUs told

By Akoh Pupa

IN AN EFFORT to make local government transactions more transparent, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) has exhorted provincial, town and city governments to post their budgets, contracts and expenses on the Internet.

In a statement, Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said local government units (LGUs) should make use of government websites to fully disclose their financial transactions.

"If local government units would not be pressured into doing this, efforts to make them more transparent and accountable will be unsuccessful," said Robredo.

He said he would ask the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, the League of Cities of the Philippines and the League of Provinces of the Philippines to come up with a joint resolution supporting the DILG's move to instruct member governments that "culture transparency, accountability, participation and performance."

"LGUs will avoid this (disclosure policy) if they can. But this is what the people want. We will use this clamor as an instrument against noncompliance to this policy," Robredo said.

Specifically, Robredo said there had to be full disclosure by all LGUs of annual budgets, income, expenditures, contracts and loans.

Robredo reminded LGUs that Republic Act No. 9184, or the Government Procurement Reform Act, stipulates the posting of the status of procurement plan, invitations to bid and bid winners in "conspicuous places within the buildings in the locality, the Internet and newspapers of general circulation."

He added that he was targeting an initial 50 percentage compliance from LGUs. "The annual procurement plans of at least 50 percent of all LGUs should be published in the Internet."

Earlier, the DILG itself took the lead by publishing on its official website its annual budget and those of the other agencies attached to it, including the Philippine National Police Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Bureau of Fire Protection, National Police Commission, Philippine Public Safety College and the Local Government Academy.

Aside from transparency, disclosing the DILG's financial statements online was "also a way to gather the feedback of the people so they can suggest how we can spend government funds," he added.

Robredo also announced that along with the full disclosure policy, he would start procurement reforms in the DILG.

One of his policies, he said, would be to allow nongovernment organizations to act as observers during biddings to check that procurement laws are being followed.

MMDA traffic enforcers to work graveyard shift

By Tina G. Santos

TRAFFIC enforcers of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will be at their posts on the graveyard shift starting tomorrow.

MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino said the deployment of traffic enforcers between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. was aimed at minimizing nighttime crime and traffic incidents, as well as heeding the agency's crackdown on "colorum" vehicles or those operating without franchises.

Previously, MMDA traffic enforcers only worked two shifts: from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. With the new setup, major lifeline Manila streets will see MMDA traffic enforcers in service 24 hours a day.

The traffic enforcers on the graveyard shift would ensure the flow of traffic, especially during a heavy downpour or flash flood, and go after road obstacles, Tolentino said.

He noted that many accidents occurred at night and that many motorists think they can get away with breaking traffic rules because there is no one to enforce them.

He said deploying traffic enforcers at night would also ensure faster response to traffic accidents.

"We will make sure the ones who will apprehend motorists will be legitimate," Tolentino further assured the public, adding that the traffic enforcers on the night shift would be carefully evaluated and selected.

Night duty personnel will be in proper uniform with their name plates and identification cards clearly visible, he said.

need a job?

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OPINION

Elementary logic

EDITORIAL

THE FIRST thing that could be said about the bold plans of the new Aquino administration to add two more years to the basic education cycle—one each for elementary and high school—is that it is too bold as to be impossible. The drawn-out debate on the issue has lasted for at least 18 years, if one considers that it was the Presidential Commission on Educational Reform of Presidents Joseph Estrada in 2000 that recommended one more year to the 10-year basic education cycle. That commission turned down the 12-year cycle and instead suggested the addition of just a year to basic education. Just the same, the recommendation didn't pass muster. How sure is new Education Secretary Armin Luistro that his two-year suggestion would not suffer the same fate?

Luistro, a religious of the Christian Brothers, a Catholic congregation that has several private schools around the country, should have realized the ambitiousness of the plan. Education, whether public or private, does not come cheap. Who will foot the bill for such a grandiose plan? Even his colleagues in the Catholic education system do not share his optimism. "Twelve years of basic education can become the legacy of the Aquino administration," Maria Bea Mateo de Leon told the Inquirer. "But will it work? It depends on the ability of the government to raise money for it."

Alas, we doubt if the administration can put its money where its mouth is. Since the Bureau of Internal Revenue is desperately trying to mobilize resources by trying to charge VAT on a radically increased SUBs roll—at no or a tax, at least salary claim—and by seeking to tax even ordinary neighborhood stores and lowly peddlers, there's no guessing that the government is pathetically cash-strapped to support its present operations and programs. Can it raise the cash for other programs, especially ambitious and costly ones? The answer is obvious based on elementary logic.

Granted the government could raise the money for the public education system, what about private schools? Wouldn't parents who send their kids to private schools be doubly penalized when they have to rummage for more money for two more years of basic school? Parents pay taxes to support the public system, but do not get any tax break or assistance for paying private tuition. Private schools have asked government to adopt the voucher system to provide the parents the power of choice—whether to enroll their children in public or private schools. Some legal pundits have raised constitutional issues on the proposal. But in some states in the United States, the system has been put in place, resulting in positive results. It introduces competition in the public system so that quality is bolstered.

At first blush, coming from the masterminds of Luistro and its proponents, including senators who surely wouldn't be responsible for paying for the costly tab, the 12-year proposal does not impress. Although Luistro said the plan is going to be unveiled during Teacher's Day on Oct. 5, his remarks indicate that the plan misses the point about adding two more years on basic education. For example, he said that the revised curriculum would include vocational courses so as to ensure that high school graduates are equipped with livelihood skills and would, therefore, be employable even if they didn't enter college. This remark goes against what Luistro himself said about his distaste for "shop-story curriculum." The present curriculum is riddled with inanities and trivialities that have yielded graduates who have no grasp of the fundamentals of reading, writing, numbers and the sciences. Never mind if they can't read, write or add and subtract, Luistro seems to be saying. Let them be employable at least. Here the view of De Leon is shared by many educators. "Darling first the curriculum," he said. "It is not crossword."

Perhaps the best argument against the 12-year cycle is that it would provide another alibi for government to spend and over-regimentalize. It would give rise to an even more bloated education bureaucracy that has time and again been exposed as the underbelly of corruption and mismanagement. We agree with De Leon: "Plug the leaks first. Adding two years now is the last thing we need in the order of priorities." Unless the present system is reformed, adding two years to basic school would only be throwing good money after bad.

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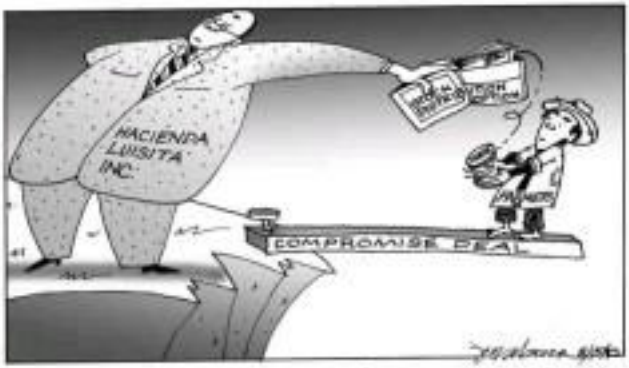

The inception of dreams

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THREE ARE movies are like to watch more than once. We go back to them for any number of reasons—to enhance the specific sensation triggered in us the first time, to understand their belies, to see how the film was put together, or perhaps to observe the disciplined consistency to which the actors performed their roles, etc. In other words, there are many levels at which we can watch a film. In my case, the repeat viewing of a film is a very conscious. I can't even say I watch movies regularly. But those films, at least, have been compelling enough to make me see them again. "The Matrix," "Inception," and, more recently "Inception."

These are great and immensely entertaining films. They are held in conception and execution. Perhaps, in a technical sense, we can even say they are path-breaking. But there are not extraordinary. Certainly, they have been far more profound and technically ambitious films. I have enjoyed watching those three films because, apart from being entertaining, they deal with themes that are of immense interest to me—escapism and the question of the truth. There is the elusive difference between the fictional world and the real world, between the dream world and the world we wake up to, or between the world of the unconscious and the world of rational consciousness. The terror of being stuck in an unreal world—be this a delusion, a delusion, or a movie—is a haunting sensation.

But wish to be woken up from a dream that is dangerously slipping out of our control. We want to free ourselves from the seductive, plotless and illusions that paralyze us. And, of course, we have developed all sorts of coping strategies, within a dream, we strive to retain the awareness that we are just in a dream, and therefore we can snap out of it at will. Inside a movie house, watching a movie that seems to end, we take hold of our ability to dose one eyes, at least, even if necessary. There, as we know, do not always work. The best movies and the best dreams, like the best answers, are those that overwhelm our defenses, lead us to unprecedentable paths and situations, and reward us with enduring sensations and meanings—while permitting us eventually to wake up.

"Inception," Christopher Nolan's new film is the whole mysterious world of dreams, sensations and constructed reality. The plot is simple enough (apologies to those who haven't seen the film): Leonardo DiCaprio's character Dom Cobb is a "dream extractor," someone trained to enter other people's dreams in order to steal their deepest secrets, by a hired by Saito, a Japanese businessman, played by Ken Watanabe, not to steal information but to implant an idea in a target person's psyche while he's lower is in a dream state. The technique is akin to giving suggestions to a person under hypnosis. The big difference is that in the film, this process is carried out within a shared dreamscape, with the use of a "Dreams Incorporated Gemeaschaftsgefühl (DIGS) device. Only the target (the scion of a business magnate) is unaware that the whole setup is. It can recognize a dream. Cobb and his team, on the other hand, retain their awareness of the dream state, even as they navigate their way through three layers of dreams in dream within a dream within a dream.

Speaking can get very complex as are complex as this. The frivolous unconscious is anchored in ordinary even for the most methodical dream manipulator Cobb, the professional dream-extractor, is haunted by his guilt over the suicide of his wife. Phantoms from his repressed memory surface in the most unexpected places, putting in doubt his ability to tell a dream from reality. Because he projects these memories into the dreams of the characters, he creates an existential reality and become active participants in an ongoing dream. On top of this, the target victim does not remain passive. He constructs unsuspected defenses from his own psyche, thus contributing further contingency to what is already a very complex situation.

I tend to keep track of the sequence of events for the first half of the film, but gave up in the face of a multiplicity of dreams that seemed impervious to logical analysis. After a quick bathroom break, I decided to relax and enjoy the rest of the film, reminding myself that this was a movie, not a dissertation.

One week later, I decided to watch "Inception" again. I wanted to figure out for myself what the director, Christopher Nolan, was doing in the film and how he was doing it. In retrospect, we call this "second-order observation." What you are watching is not the movie itself but how the director is putting it together—what his problems are and what decisions he is making, what he is focusing upon and what he is leaving out, and what sensations he is trying to create and implant in the viewers' psyche. This film lends itself well to this kind of reading. Yet it remains elusive. The viewer is kept guessing whether in the end Cobb woke up to reality or was stranded in the limbo of dreams.

I felt better after watching "Inception" for the second time. It occurred to me that perhaps the whole story was nothing but a multi-layered dream in Cobb's head. And that the film itself is not about the inception of dreams but about the making of movies, especially movies that remind us of the first time that organized filmmaker Georges Méliès.

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A mother's wish

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

SUE STORY is told that one day Michelangelo was lying on a scaffolding, painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, when a woman came in to the chapel to pray. Feeling bored and wanting to play a joke on her, he said in a solemn voice: "I am Jesus Christ." And the woman supposedly, without even looking up said: "Out of I am talking to your mother!"

* * *

Today is the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother. In Today's Gospel (Lk 1, 39-56) Mary sings her "Magnificat." She praises God for the greatness of the Lord. There is no need to stress the primacy of Christ over Mary. She herself has said at the wedding in Cana: "Do whatever He tells you." Mary does not point to herself. She always points Jesus. She knows her rightful place—in the service of her Son.

* * *

With all due respect to Christians who do not revere or respect and, in fact, even hate Mary, I really do not understand where they are coming from. First of all, Christianity is a religion of love, not hate. Second, in Christianity, only God is adored, and the use of as here at least to be respected, including Mary from the Muslims respect and revere Mary for, why this big issue and disrespect, and even hatred for the Blessed Mother?

* * *

Let's put it this way: How would those done Aquino feel if you say you are the best, and not you disrespect and even hate his mother Cory? We do not glorify Mary, in fact, Mary herself says in today's scriptures: "My soul glorifies the Lord!" So let us all glorify the Lord, together with Mary!

* * *

Fr. Raymon Fredis, SVD, on Filipino missionary in Congo, rightly points out that the first thing Filipino missionaries do when they migrate is to petition for their parents to join them. "The assumption of Mary is about the joy of petitioning her to be with Him in heaven." He goes on to say that what Jesus did for His Mother at the Assumption a He way of showing His love for His Mother, especially as she had grown old and frail.

* * *

The Assumption is all about a loving God who got involved and connected with humanity. God still connects with you and me directly in this present time. No problems with that. But historically speaking, God connected with humanity in a special way—through a lowly, simple, ambitious, love woman named Mary, and He chose her to be the Mother of His Son, whose only agenda was to obey God's will. As it was then, so it is until now: Mary's message is: "Just me, but my best God's will be done!"

* * *

A timely message of the Assumption is that, with God's help, we can live above whatever weighs us down or burdens us. We need not be pressed down or imprisoned forever. It is a beautiful message of freedom and hope.

* * *

The Assumption also reminds us that the Lord casts the lowly and casts away the proud-hearted. "He has thrown the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly." How consoling to know that there is a God who knows and sees everything, a God who sees and rewards goodness and love. Yes, God is a faithful God. He keeps His promise. Like Mary, all we need to do is to trust and believe. "Blessed are you who believe that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

* * *

Just now, I received this beautiful text message: "In all things, always give thanks! You might not be where you want to be, but neither are you where you used to be. If it hasn't happened yet, that doesn't mean it won't happen. A delay is not a denial from God. ... in His own time, He will make all things beautiful!"

* * *

What makes the message beautiful is not just the content, but because it is coming from my 88-year-old Mama! The herself has gone through a lot in life, but she has stead-fastly held on to God all these years, and has constantly and consistently modeled on her children. So do the same. Mama never ceases to amaze and edify me with her humility, prayerfulness, optimism and joyful sacrifice.

* * *

My prayer for our family has become simple: May all of Mama's wishes in her heart be to come true! More than anybody else in the family, who, other than the mother, has the best wishes for everyone? A mother perceives and loves deeply indeed, mothers know best, and love most.

* * *

"My greatest joy is that we all will be reunited with God someday. My greatest sorrow is if anyone of you will not make it there." From the time we were growing up until now, Mama has always reminded us of how important heaven is. Mama believes that we all will do well in this world, but more than worldly success, she has taught us—by her very life and example—the call, the challenge and the promise of eternal life.

* * *

We will be in California with "blind angel" Fatima Soriano from Aug. 13 to 21. For our schedule of activities in the LA area, please call Tess (562) 227-8660; (951) 3504877; and for our schedule in the SFO area, please call Ruby (510) 378-1908.

* * *

A memorial with the Lord:

Lord, help us to do God's will so that we all will be reunited in heaven someday. Amen.

Enhancing executive-judicial relations

WITH DUE RESPECT

Antonio T. Carpio

THE HEARING nomination of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima inserting Chief Justice Renato C. Corona during the latter's induction as chair of the Philippine Chapter of the Asian Law Association a few days ago was totally the most applauded among the many speeches that evening. Saying that Chief Justice "is someone who believes in the integrity of rule-based action rather than in the supremacy of only those who agree with him," De Lima flowed the harmonious relations between Malacañang and the Supreme Court.

Nothing personal. Expressing surprise at being invited to lead the distinguished luncheon speakers—a panel of justices including former chief justices and top lawyers from Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines, De Lima frankly admitted that while she had "nothing personal against Chief Justice Renato Corona as an individual, I have also not been shy expressing my reservations on the circumstances surrounding his appointment."

Days earlier, President Aquino signaled his desire to wrest his relations with the Court by exempting Corona from the coverage of Executive Order No. 1 that scrolled, wreaked and withdrew the midnight appointments made by his predecessor, thereby effectively recognizing the new chief's appointment as "settled law."

To be transparent, I myself believe that Supreme Court justices are covered by the constitutional ban on midnight appointments. My stand is consistent with my concurrence in the earlier ruling of this Valentine's Day (Nov. 9, 1996) written by then Chief Justice Andres R. Narvasa. But the present Court has spoken clearly that Supreme Court justices are exempted from the ban. Even though *I disagree with this new decision*, I respectfully bow to it. This is the essence of democracy: we live by the rule of law.

Historically, the new chief has always been related from the films most serious justice of the Supreme Court. And being the second most senior Corona would surely have been nominated to the top post by the Judicial and Bar Council. Thus, were it the appointment of the new chief were made today outside of the prohibited period, he would still have been a serious contender for the post.

Cometeress Builder Named associate justice at age 53, Corona is one of the youngest ever to join the highest court, but to retire on Oct. 15, 2018, he would be chief justice for over eight years, giving him the distinction of serving the longest in that office since 1961.

He obtained his Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws with honors from the Ateneo de Manila, and his Master of Laws from Harvard University where he focused on foreign investment policies and the regulation of corporate and financial institutions. For over 17 years, he taught commercial law, taxation and corporation law at the Ateneo Law School. This background should endear him to those who believe that justice is best served when understanding of business and economics.

He were together to the Court for over four years—from his appointment on April 9, 2002 till my retirement on Dec. 7, 2006. Amiable and soft spoken, he is more of a less-prolific consensus builder rather than a quotable advocate of lonely causes. But given on the anti-Internet speeches, he prefers peace to person persuasion. To me, his most memorable decision that he is "Republik vs. Sandiganbayan" (July 31, 2003), which ruled that the $658 million deposited to Swiss banks by President Ferdinand Marcos constituted ill-gotten wealth.

* * *

Dear parents. With due respect to the dean and the faculty of the University of the Philippines College of Law who called for the immediate resignation of Justice Mariano C. del Castillo for alleged plagiarism, I believe that due process must be observed and that the Supreme Court should be given the opportunity to pass upon the novel questions raised.

As I wrote last Sunday, we should let the case be resolved prudently, fairly and speedily. The process is well underway. Let us wait. At this point, the late Joe Galvez Tan (or anyone else) should neither be condemned nor exculpated.

* * *

Super lawyer. Congratulations to super lawyer Ms. Lourdes "Mother" S. Sereno for being P-Noy's first appointee to the Supreme Court. She will serve on the Court for 20 years, and may in time become the first lady chief justice of the Philippines.

She personifies, in my opinion, the caliber of Court that P-Noy wants: unquestioned competence in law and economics, integrity beyond the ordinary, keen independence of mind, and extraordinary gravitas. As a professor at the UP Philippine Judicial Academy, Hague Academy of International Law, University of Western Australia, and Asian Institute of Management.

Well versed in international law, she served as counsel of the Philippines at the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization. She has been legal retainer (as co-counsel of retired Justice Florentino P. Feliciano) are the two arbitration cases in Washington, DC (Fraport vs Philippines) and in Singapore (Piatco vs Philippines). Having been consulted by them from time to time, I enjoyed a cozy rapport with her. These cases were won.

In my sensitivity, her most important victory is "North Cotabato vs Government" (Oct. 14, 2008) in which the Supreme Court, voting 12-3, declared unconstitutional the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain entered into by the government with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. I was so impressed reading her memorandum in that case that I publicly praised it, the only case I ever did in this column.

* * *

Comments are welcome at *cbcfjoe@supremecourt.gov.ph* and *karst@hotmail.com*.

The illustrious club of educated men

METHOD TO MADNESS

Patricia Evangelista

THE DEPARTMENT of Education would like to restore the decline in the quality of Philippine education. Within the next five years of the Aquino administration, the DepEd will replace the existing 10-year educational cycle—six years of elementary, four of high school—with a 12-year education plan that includes seven years of primary and five years of secondary education.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro says after K12, a high school diploma will be enough for employment, forgetting that employment determine are not a function of personality, but decree. The DepEd believes too much is being taught in too little time. Former Education Undersecretary Jose Miguel Luz, now education adviser to President Aquino, says the problem is one of quality. Because only 10 years are spent in primary and secondary education, he believes the system becomes a compressed of "a little bit of this, a little bit of that."

Butch Abad, campaign manager and now budget secretary to President Aquino, has said that many adult Filipinos studied at the Filipino students and up being more tired than Japanese students "because we came to many subjects in such a short period of time."

Beyond the single argument of "too much cramming," the gentlemen of the DepEd—and Abad—had the same desire to a meaningful proposition. The current 10-year basic education cycle in the Philippines "is already obsolete since most nations already implement a 12-year education plan." We must "catch up with the rest of the world," and "if the rest of the world has gone 12 years or more, I don't understand how we can think we're smarter."

The first I can't say, and there is some truth in his statement—education has certainly not made educated men of our educated officials, if they believe "because everyone is doing it we" makes their solution the right solution. If this state were so interested in the opinions and standards of an imaginary international community, perhaps it would be more important to look at the United Nations' Human Development Index. In 2009's 2010 Education For All Global Monitoring Report said about the state of Philippine education. The report cites the Philippines as a "particularly striking example of underperformance" with policies "failing to make a difference in improving the education of the poorest Filipinos."

This is not to say that I don't agree with what the panel of Filipinos, the fault of whom they are meant to service, are those who cannot afford to wait 12 years for a high school diploma. Many of them cannot even wait the necessary 10. The UP pointed to the rising numbers of out-of-school youths, over a hundred thousand more than in 2000. One quarter of those drop out before Grade 5. Past Filipinos at find school an average of seven years—more than four years fewer than students in that country's top 20 percent. Six percent of the poorest children have never attended school.

There is nothing to keep these students studying if they are unable to afford it. Of those who graduate high school, a dreamed years (and big spending) will change it. Of 100 who enter first grade, only 66 graduate high school, and only 36 make it to college. The UP attributes one of the world's lowest levels of school attendance to marginalization. Poverty and location make it impossible for many to study. According to the UP, "the poorest 20 percent of the Philippines is on par with Zambia, and only Laos says the areas of dropping out to a different problem.

Our emphasis that K12 will not secure the budget, since the money—a whopping hundred billion pesos—will come from revenue previously lost to corruption. "It's money that is not available," Luistro says, "it's money that is wasting." It is one of the most basic justifications in a country where all manner of measures are used to justify squandering taxpayer's money. A hundred billion pesos in public funds is still a hundred billion pesos in public funds, no matter how many times it is vaulted in the national boundary of corruption.

With only limited finances, K12 is one of this country need to justify exactly why limited finances are not going to market-rewarding school buildings in the ARMM, and the education of the indigenous in the hinterlands where it takes four hours on foot to reach what can be roughly considered as a classroom. They need to know why 2.5 year-old Kindergarten Pilot Prang Elementary school in Mindanao still have to scramble from location to location in the middle of sixth grade math. A hundred billion pesos can go a long way in early readers, uniforms and scholarships. (A note: tuition in Muslim Mindanao High School, whose principal is forced to chapter terms breaks because there are only seven books for 10,000 students. A DepEd estimate for this schoolyear 2009 to 2011 puts what is needed for the most crucial spending at 991.2 billion. The alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) earlier said the country needs an additional 94,240 classrooms to accommodate the more than 22 million students this year.

Her connection to my administration is lavished. "The problem with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's administration is that it focused on building classrooms, hiring teachers, and procuring textbooks. You're throwing money into the problem," he said.

Secretary Luistro considers it's possible the current curriculum is too overloaded in education. He plot, he says, is not just to add years to the current education cycle. Irrelevant subjects would be taken out of the curriculum, while new subjects that develop the technical and vocational skills of the students would be incorporated. It is a necessary solution, and does away with the need for additional years.

And yet the K12 plan, as it stands, will deliver the parental opposition to the E12 proposal, shrugged off the concerns and said parents only want the shortest possible educational cycle for their children.

"They don't want their kids to go to college. They just want their kids to work as they still learn in school."

It is a fear felt by many students, college isn't an option. It's true: many families are unwilling to invest in education. What Abad fails to understand is that for many, a year to school is a near insurmountable difficulty—mainly because the largest concern is the next meal.

Perhaps it would be good for Mr. Abad to speak to the next who left his education in favor of hunger, spending 6 months in the August rain, or the tricycle driver who make 9150 a day, or the tattooed Zamboanga policeman who count coins for the lost video of their small girls. Ask 15-year old Roxanne, who carries twins, not boarding with her friend of her wanting at home while she cleans bottles of vinegar for enough for your bus fare. Ask them if they would like to finish their education is, and they'll say college for the kids, or for the ones who have had their dreams beaten out of them, a high school diploma and a better life than theirs.

This is not a middle-class society, and still the government persists in treating it as such. This is what all this is a failure to understand. This is what all this is a failure to understand. This is what all this is a failure to understand

TALK *of the* TOWN

Please send feedback to: [illegible]
Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

BASIC EDUCATION

How to go from 10 to 12 years

"I will expand basic education in this country from a short 10-year cycle to a globally comparable 12 years before the end of (my) administration (2016)"

President Aquino
Campaign platform
"10 things I will fix in Philippine basic education"

By Juan Miguel Luz

HOW can two years of schooling be added to basic education without overburdening the system, disrupting the entry of high school graduates into college, and unfairly increasing family expenses?

The Education Team of the Liberal Party and its then nominee's former, Benigno Aquino III, laid out the following plan to examine how this could be done.

Cost of setting up two additional years and universal preschool

Additional year of high school

- Increase in enrollment (SY 2010-11 to SY 2016-17) = 2.5 million
- Additional classrooms needed @ 45 students/classroom = 55,365
- Additional teachers needed @ 1.3 teachers per new class = 82,740

Additional year of elementary school

- Increase in enrollment (SY 2010-11 to SY 2016-17) = 3.6 million
- Additional classrooms needed @ 45 students/classroom = 83,909
- Additional teachers needed @ 1.3 teachers per new class = 128,055

Universal preschool

- Increase in enrollment (SY 2010-11 to SY 2016-17) = 3.3 million
- Classrooms needed @ 30 students/class (double shift) = 92,177
- Teachers needed = 99,300

Total investment to be made at current unit costs

- High school = P64.8 billion (from SY 2010-11 to SY 2015-16)
- Elementary = P15.7 billion
- Universal preschool = P43.3 billion
- TOTAL = P123.8 billion for five years or P24.8 billion a year

The estimates should be refined by DepEd on a year-to-year basis based on actual enrollments.

Step 1A: Reintroduce Bridge Program

In school year (SY) 2003-13 (Year 1), reintroduce the Bridge Program as part of high school.

The bridge is to be a one-year enhancement program in English, science and mathematics for public elementary graduates based on the National Achievement Test (NAT) for Grade 6. These are targeted to enter high school in SY 2004-05 (Year 2).

The Bridge Program would be in place for three school years starting SY 2011-12 (Year 11) through 2013-14 (Year 3).

Step 1B: Every child a reader by Grade 3

Starting SY 2010-11 (Year 0), the curriculum school year), the Department of Education (DepEd) should ensure that "every child should be an independent reader by the end of Grade 3."

Children unable to read independently at the end of Grade 3 should not be promoted to Grade 4. Otherwise, schooling will become a waste of resources in the expansion of new learning. The inability to read with comprehension is the single largest handicap to learning.

Pupils at the end of Grade 2 must also be able to do the four operations of arithmetic with proficiency (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division).

If children are able to read, write and do arithmetic proficiently through Grades 4, 5 and 6, then by SY 2014-15 (Year 4), there would be no need for the bridge. This level would be converted into the first year (HS-1) of a new five-year high school program.

In preparation for the five-year high school, DepEd should complete the review of the high school curriculum at least one year before (SY 2011-12 or Year 2) so that it can be ready to be rolled out four years of high school to five years by SY 2014-15 (Year 4).

Step 2A: Bring 5-year-olds to school as kindergarten

Starting SY 2011-12 (Year 1), convene all 6-year-olds into kindergarten with 3-(and-a-) year-olds going into Grade 1.

Every year after the current four school years, DepEd should work to bring in 20 percent more 5-year-olds into kindergarten until 1.88 percent of the age group are enrolled by SY 2014-15.

This will be a major effort considering that only one-third of 6-year-olds are in Grade 1 even after 11 years of the official policy. The key to this are parents who should be made to understand the importance of bringing their children to school at the right age. But it also means boosting the influence ratio to accommodate an additional 880,000 plus 6-year-olds in kindergarten every year.

Once 100 percent of 6-year-olds are in kindergarten (SY 2014-15 or Year 4), this can then be converted to Grade 1 in SY 2015-16 (Year 5).

At that point, the entire elementary cycle would be normalized to Grades 1 to 6 (e.g. Grade 1 renamed Grade 2, ... Grade 6 renamed Grade 7). This would mean "scanning" every pupil by one year to what would be a one-time adjustment. At the same time, HS-1 would be renamed Grade 8, HS-2 would become Grade 9 and so on with HS-4 becoming Grade 12.

Thus, by SY 2015-16 (Year 5), the 12-year cycle would be complete.

Step 2B: Build a preschool infrastructure for 5-year-olds

Starting SY 2011-12 (Year 1), build the proper preschool infrastructure for 5-year-olds in every public elementary school.

Preschool is quite important in building block for children. Worldwide research shows that children who do preschooling have a higher likelihood of completing the elementary and secondary cycle. That's important for a country that loses at least a quarter (24 percent) of all children before the start of Grade 6.

DepEd should start building the preschool infrastructure (5 percent at a time) over a five-year period. In this case, about 780,000 plus 5-year-old pupils would enter into the public school system every year for five years starting SY 2011-12 (Year 1).

By SY 2015-16 (Year 5), 100 percent of the projected preschool-aged children should be (either in public preschool) universal for around 3.5 million Filipino children. By then, the second point in PNoy's basic education agenda would have been met. "All Filipino school children (and all public schools) will have a full year of preschooling as their introduction to formal schooling by 2016."

Final configuration

The final configuration by SY 2015-16 onwards would be a preschool in Grade 12 cycle with preschool and Grade 7 part of elementary school (Grades 1-6). High school could be divided into a three-year junior (regular) high school and a two-year senior high school.

A regular high school diploma at the end of Grade 10 for purpose of work (for those finishing the current 10-year cycle). For those interested in college education, senior high school for a set of college-preparatory courses should be a requirement.

Tech-voc, business ago

To encourage students to stop through Grade 12, however, two alternative tracks for senior high school could be allowed. A technical-vocational track that could lead to industry accreditation, and a business track for those interested in entrepreneurship.

The PH 7-1 assignment recommends to use the existing elementary and high school campus without means.

Addressing concerns

- With an additional year of high school, will there be less time per year for academics?

At no point will there be a year with no graduates from high school. The bridge will involve six in one year (shorter than any but of high school graduates will fall) and would continue in any century will be lesser (SY 2015-16). But that is a one-year adjustment after which incoming years will be back to normal numbers.

- Will families be burdened by cost for the additional years of schooling?

Public schools have no tuition since the Constitution provides for free, universal public basic education. There are, however, incidental costs to families (uniforms, school supplies, transportation and lunch). It is only starting SY 2015-16, however, when parents will have to bear the additional incidental costs since this is the first year of the pays on families.

There are measures to help poorer families deal with these costs, including the use of conditional cash transfers (4Ps or The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development). This is one way to help these families gain access to more, not less, education.

- Will private schools be forced to follow the 12-year cycle?

The recommendations is to focus the reform on the public school system until he private schools adjust based on their own resources.

Over time, universities will look for the additional years of basic education. As their entry private schools may have to follow the public school system. This will have real issues to face.

To help families, DepEd should scale up the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education to include more private schools and students in the education voucher-type contracting scheme.

(Juan Miguel Luz (juanmiguel.luz@gmail.com) is executive director for development management at the Ateneo School of Government. The education reform team of the Liberal Party (Mahar Mangahas, Joe Noriel Pedroy and Solomon Lumba) included former education secretaries Edilberto C. de Jesus, Jesli Lapus, Bro. Eli Soliman and Ellen Tordesillas, former education undersecretaries Luz and Chito Gascon, former assistant secretary Gil Beltran, former education director Augusto Sarmiento and former head of Adopt-A-School program Sharon Siazon. The team consulted with many from the private education sector and others all of the major education associations and number of graduates and schools with coverage. The author headed the education reform team.)

Five reasons for an expanded high school program

1. Global competitiveness

The global standard for basic education is 12 years (Unesco). Philippine basic education is the shortest cycle of any country in Asia for those interested in university (six grades of elementary plus four years of high school). Viewed from the outside, this cycle is not seen as long enough to cover subject matter other countries now include as part of basic education. Instead, we count the same 12-year curriculum into a short 10-year cycle. The result: skimpy coverage leading to little or poor learning.

Two more years of schooling will give children more time to read, write and do exercises and problem sets for the same global curriculum.

2. Preparation for college

The President of Task Force on Education set up by the Aquino administration concluded that high school graduates are not adequately prepared for university as evidenced by the number of failures in college entrance examinations.

At the same time, universities are having to expand the number of years to complete a full degree. Fewer universities now offer a degree in four years. Most courses include up to five semesters to complete as the supervision of an additional year.

Why the additional year of college? Because first year college offerings called "General Education" are, in fact, high school subjects. An additional year of high school will better prepare students for university.

3. Preparation for world of work

A survey by the Department of Education (DepEd) in 2008 revealed that 44 percent of public high school graduates were not interested in university and preferred to work, even at age 15.

Are high school school graduates ready for the world of work? Are employers finding high school graduates ready for work?

The consensus among employers: A high school diploma with its current coverage is inadequate for their purposes. Graduates show deficiencies in their ability to communicate, to think logically and to solve problems. The levels of math, basic science and English language skills are below par.

An extra year of high school with technical-vocational subjects will provide the additional time needed to more properly mold graduates for the world of work.

4. Public support for 5th year of high school

In August 2003, DepEd commissioned Social Weather Stations to poll the general public in preparation for the high school Bridge Program in 2004.

Seventy percent of parents agreed to a bridge year (and therefore a five-year high school). If their children were found to come low on the high school readiness test. More in Mindanao (76 percent) agreed (than in Luzon (69 percent); the Visayas (67 percent) or Metro Manila (65 percent). Ten percent were undecided and 20 percent disagreed.

Among socioeconomic classes, all agreed to the additional year of high school in the same extent (ABC = 72 percent versus D and E = 70 percent). Finally, not all with a university education were more supportive of the additional year (73 percent) than those with at least a college education (66 percent).

Clearly, those with less education did not wish their children would have the same fate.

5. Parents for Bridge Program

In May 2004, DepEd conducted the national high school readiness test to determine the preparedness of elementary graduates for high school. Less than 1 percent passed the test at 75 percent mean passing score (MPS); 7.5 percent passed at a 50 percent MPS.

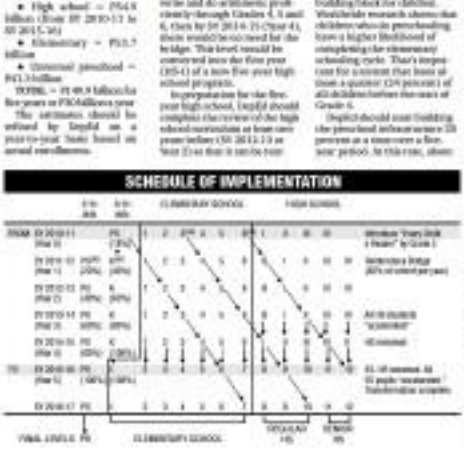
Based on this, half of all elementary graduates were unable (by DepEd standards) to perform their first regular high school (i.e. a low-year high school). The other 50 percent would go directly to HS-1 and take a four-year high school course.

In June 2004, then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo moved to cancel the project. With DepEd having as a group, a compromise was reached. The bridge year would be voluntary. "Parents will decide at enrollment whether to send their children to the Bridge Program or to the regular High School I."

A total of 2,945 schools offered the bridge on a voluntary basis (49.33 percent of all high schools) enrolling 248,885 students (20.77 percent of the freshman cohort). The voluntary enrollment showed that a significant number of families understands accepted the value of the additional year of schooling for their children's future.

Juan Miguel Luz

SCHEDULE OF IMPLEMENTATION



Across the NATION

P775M released for gov't pay hike

PNP chief likes Facebook, to tap it vs criminals

LAMP-VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Following the arrest of a murder suspect in Angeles City whom police were able to track down through his Facebook account, the Philippine National Police (PNP) here might use the Internet-based networking site in help in its antiterror operations.

PNP Director General Ronald Dela Rosa said he is now considering tapping Facebook, a popular networking site, for the entire PNP unit, following a move by the Laguna provincial police office to launch a Facebook page that listed all crime suspects in the province.

"We saw the importance of this [Internet tool after the arrest of the] suspect in the Angeles massacre," said Dela Rosa on Friday.

"Facebook users and civic organizations helped me in the follow-up operations. We want this to be the thrust of antiterrorism," the PNP chief said at the turnover ceremony of the regional police chief here Friday.

Police were able to track down Mark Dipon, the main suspect in a series of robberies and murders in Angeles City in Pampanga, after witnesses saw and confirmed his identity through his picture on his Facebook account.

Earlier reports said Dipon happened to be "friends" with one of the victims' daughters on Facebook.

Sources said the PNP's list of crime suspects is already available to the public, citing a website of the Philippine Anti-Cybercrime Emergency Response as building-block for such program.

Senior Insp. Gilbert Cruz, Laguna police director, who himself owned a personal Facebook account, said he saw the potential of the networking site in the fight against crime.

Mariviar Cleaz, Inquirer Southern Luzon

BIG CATCH
A boy proudly displays a golden trevally which he caught with a net in Tagauak Island.

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—The government, the country's biggest employer, has released P775.8 million for the salary increases of 59,443 government employees in Western Visayas, most of them teachers, budget regional director Alfonso Bedonia Jr. said Wednesday.

Bedonia, who was in Bacolod City with Budget Secretary Florencio Abad, said the amount released by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) was the second phase in the increase of salaries of government employees, the sum of which would be in 2015.

He said P666.4 million for pay increases of 52,932 employees of the Department of Education was released last Friday.

The increases range from 15 to 30 percent depending on position, Bedonia said.

The DBM also released P12.4 million for 1,044 employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways, P76.3 million for 6,283 employees of state colleges and universities, P6.2 million for the 365 Technical Education and Skills Development Authority workers, and P18.35 million for 1,199 employees of the Department of Health sheets Western Visayas, he said.

The increases for employees of other national government agencies were released in their central offices, Bedonia said.

But while thousands of government workers would soon enjoy salary increases, a few were being sacked by their immediate superiors.

In Tacloban, the city's health officer lost his job after he was sacked amid the rise in the number of dengue fever cases.

Tacloban City Mayor Alfred Romualdez fired Dr. Jaime Opinion on Monday, saying Opinion wasn't fit for the job.

"He (Opinion) is more of a surgeon rather than a doctor that's concerned on public health," Romualdez said on Wednesday.

As a surgeon, Opinion might not have the expertise in dealing with public health emergencies, like the spread of dengue in Tacloban.

"It's not his forte," said the mayor. "I want someone who has full control of the city health office."

Opinion's relief came just as Tacloban tried to take a grip on a growing number of dengue cases.

As of Tuesday, dengue has killed 16 persons and brought 1,384 to hospitals. With Joap Gatdula, Inquirer Visayas

Ifugao legislator seeks pay for watershed protectors

BAGUIO CITY—Ifugao Rep. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. has introduced a measure that would make the protection of upland watersheds profitable for their inhabitants.

Baguilat, a neophyte lawmaker, said House Bill No. 1420 puts economic value to forest protection and provides a ultimate change strategy that benefits lowland farms.

He said this is achieved by extending to a bigger area the revenues shared by communities that host power-generating facilities such as hydroelectric dams or geothermal plants.

The Regional Development Council of the Cordillera has declared the mountain region as Luzon's watershed cradle. In 2008, it began negotiating with the Ifugao, Cagayan and Central Luzon regional for a compensation mechanism that pays for the highland waters that irrigate Luzon farms and fuel the island's various power plants.

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, more than 1.8 million hectares of mountainous river basins flowing through North Luzon rely on the Cordillera watersheds alone.

The DENR said Luzon farms "are enjoying an environmental dividend," which is attributed to increased mountain farmlands, expanding populations, and human pollution that could oxygen a bigger economic slide unless government intervenes.

"Unfortunately, under the present compensation system [of government], only 'host communities' [of the dams or hydroelectric power generating facilities... are compensated to lessen the conflict of rights and [to] promote cooperation among host communities affected by dams or power generating facilities, the power producers, and the concerned government agencies," Baguilat said in his proposed measure.

He proposed to include all barangays, municipalities, provinces and regions among the parties that should share in profits generated by private industries that are Cordillera watershed resources.

The Department of Energy collects in host communities a common per kilowatt hour of electricity sold.

The floods that crippled Pangasinan and La Union in the end of 2009, due to the onslaught of Typhoon "Pepeng," reaffirmed the need to address watershed management to the mountain regions, Baguilat said.

"Give funding assistance to upland communities and they will protect the source of the [river] wealth; if they do not get help, poverty compels many [Cordilleran villages] to cut forest trees in order to earn a living," he said. Edward Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

It's 'Last Lap' in Subic

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—After nearly two decades of hosting national and international racing events, the Subic International Raceway (SIR) here has seen the end of its glory days.

Led by the Romirez family, more than 20 motor racing clubs in the country gathered at the SIR last week for a three-day racing event dubbed "The Last Lap" to bid farewell to what was once home to the best Filipino racers.

LEGEND The Romirezes, the famed racing family, learn their 10-motor racing clubs in the country gathered at the Subic International Raceway (SIR) last week for a three-day racing event dubbed "The Last Lap" to bid farewell to what was once home to the best Filipino racers.

Seventeen years ago, after decades of trying to put up a dedicated racing facility, the late Rodolfo Ramirez, Mike Potenciano and five other pioneers of motor racing opened the SIR and revived circuit racing in the country.

When it was completed in 2000, the 2.3-kilometer, 12-curve circuit became the first year-round racing facility. It eventually became the country's first international race track.

"Seventeen years ago, I can still remember the place was filled with cars, and it was an exciting time. Thanks to Subic Bay Freeport and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, we were able to revive and sustain circuit racing for 17 years," Georges Ramirez, Rodolfo's son and organizer of The Last Lap, said in a statement.

"And here, 17 years later, it is coming to an end, which is a bit sad," he said.

Since its inception, the SIR has hosted many national and international racing events for cars, motorcycles, bicycles, go-karts, soap box derbies and amateur-controlled cars.

It also became the venue for drag races, rallies, slalom, drift events, and even driving school and club events.

Summits and the typical race season consisted of circuit-type races, motorcycle races, FIA Grand Prix, and the Philippine National Touring Car series which used touring cars, Silent Offroad and vintage cars.

Usually, 12 races were held annually, each sanctioned for three days a "Run What You Bring" race was held in April and the annual Philippine Motor Sport's festival was organized in November.

Before its closure, the Subic raceway was operated by the Ramirez family-owned Sports Vehicle Inc. and governed by the Automotive Association of the Philippines and the Federation Internationale de Automobile.

The raceway witnessed many of the famous feats of Filipino drivers in the motor racing world, including the Celso Mitsubishi production car championship in 1993-1996, as well as in 1997, and 1998-99, and the most prestigious Formula Asia in 1996.

As the Subic raceway literature became the only Filipino to win motor championships in 1966, its also placed second overall in the Formula Asia 2000. Robert Hamegas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Robredo: 16 towns not ready to be cities

INTERIOR Secretary Jesse Robredo yesterday said he is unsure opposed to the conversion of 16 municipalities into cities without meeting requirements under the law.

But in a statement, Robredo said he would just "abstain" from the Supreme Court decision on the case filed against the cityhood of the 16 towns.

"They are not legally qualified," he said in a phone interview.

Saying it was his personal stand, Robredo, however, said he won't try to influence the high court in its decision on the cityhood case.

"What we are talking about here is the urbanization level of a municipality," said Robredo in a statement quoting him.

"Look at Makati City. Its physical land area was not that big, but its level of urbanization was the primary index," said the former mayor of Naga City.

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INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Nina R. Alvarado

A FOUNTAIN inside Gloria de Dapitan, a recreation spot named after ex-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo by one of her enregos allies and businessman Romeo Jalosjos.

Dapitan not all about history, seafood treats

By Project Pinoli
Dapitan City

BUILT ON THE irregular coastlines of Zamboanga del Norte in the historic city of Dapitan. Synonymous to its name is Dr. Jose Rizal, the national hero, who spent four years of exile in the city from 1892 to 1896.

Dapitan was, as it was originally called, was inhabited by the Subanen, a nomadic group of people who thrived by the river banks or lake.

From pre-Hispanic era to the time of its founder, Datu Pagbuya, to the arrival of Spanish conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and the Augustinian friars in 1565 until the Japanese occupation, Dapitan was a hub of divergent cultures.

Walking along its city center is like being in a time warp. Dapitan has kept the convenience of 19th century house of pueblos where the ilustrados, municipio, escuela and principalia mansions survived the crisis.

The Cathedral of St. James the Greater, built in 1871, is a proud legacy of the Jesuit missionaries here, along with the Dapohan School, which succeeded the order's one until 2003.

The present City Hall used to be the mansion in the 1890s. Across it is the marker of Casa Real, where the house of Ricardo Carrizare, then the politico-military commander, once stood.

Century-old acacia trees lining the plaza are still literally reared, providing shade to excitement-goers of dining.

Sprawling casuarina are the preserved heritage houses with huge Capiz shell windows, serpentine and ornately designed transoms.

Handarao Festival

No other city celebrates the life and works of Rizal much more than the Dapitanons do. Every December, the Handarao Festival commemorates Rizal's heroic contributions to this city. A marker of his arrival here on July 17, 1892, was recently unveiled.

Outside the Rizal shrine at Port Santiago, in Intramuros, Manila, the one in Dapitan is the most visited, thus earning for it the reputation as the Shrine City of the Philippines.

Inside this 15-hectare preserved memorial are the replicas of Rizal's house, the Casa Redonda (octagonal clinic) and the Casa Cuadrada (dormitory and classroom). Perhaps the most attractive portion of the shrine is the Love Birds where Rizal and Josephine Bracken, his date extranjera, stood and promised their love for each other.

The Rizalana Museum also showcases various memorabilia of how the national hero spent his life taking care of the sick, teaching the young boys, and building the community through his inventions.

Dakak resort

Another reason to visit Dapitan is Dakak Park Beach Resort nestled in the cove of Tagaibo. Hemmed in by its 750-meter velvety white sand and turquoise water glistening under the Zamboanga del Norte sun, Dakak is the ultimate beach eveday.

It offers a natural spa experience gazing at the undulating scenery in the outdoor jacuzzi while the scent of frangipani and other local blooms permeates the air.

But Dapitan is not all about tranquility, luxury and unforgettable seafood treats. The other wild side of it is Gloria de Dapitan, the first and only amusement park in Mindanao.

Brave your stomach right and animals there decided-breaking screams in Fantasyland's bio rides. Its urban zoning is a great example of how modern conveniences can blend well with the old without losing its beautiful heritage structures.

Every July, Dapitanons celebrate their religiosity and the riches of their cultural diversity through the Kinabayo Festival. In honor of their patron saint, people go out to the streets in parade of colors and pageantry as they shout Viva Senior Santiago!

Over time, this quaint little town has really earned its spot on the national tourism circuit not only as a historical and cultural destination but also for its ecological attractions. There is so much to celebrate in Dapitan.

A STATUE of an angel stands inside Fantasyland, a recreation facility for children built by Jalosjos, who had served jail term for the rape of a minor.

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Sereno: 'Triumph of intellect over shabby politics'

From page A1

JUSTICE Antonio Sereno

...ngress to make his first appointee to the high court someone that she and the God only met when he requested to be briefed on some cases pending in the Senate.

"President Aquino is not paying off a political debt, or investing in a political asset. Obviously, he merely chose the best and the brightest in our country, that is an achievement in itself," Santiago said.

She sadly recalled the interview the President and Sereno in their hearing here at the Ateneo de Manila University at the same time. Mr. Aquino is Sereno's junior by a year, having graduated in 1980. Jesse the Ateneo valedictorian earned her economics degree in 1980.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said he asked Sereno about it. "She said it seems they were because classmates because [she] was constantly abroad," he told the station DZRH radio yesterday.

Santiago said Sereno was "one of the leading arbitrators in the Asian region on international trade law." The two had awaited together on some of the international disputes that are pending in the Senate.

Both graduated with honors from the University of the Philippines College of Law and both earned their post-graduate degree in law from the University of Michigan in the United States.

Santiago said Sereno was "humble and conscientious."

"She tends to hide her light under a bushel. My impression is that if her expertise were not so remarkable, she would probably just want to be with the wallpaper," the senator said.

Competence, not seniority

Before Sereno's appointment was announced, Lacierda told reporters that seniority wasn't one of the factors that Mr. Aquino was considering in making his five Supreme Court appointment.

He said Mr. Aquino's criteria were probity, integrity and past performance.

Another factor was competence, to the case of Sereno, said Lacierda.

"She was instrumental in the government's winning the Fisheries case. If we had lost the case, the government would have been obligated to pay a huge amount," he said.

The connections that built the terminal, the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (PIATCO), sought international arbitration after the government voided its contract in 2003 for being illegal, which the Supreme Court upheld in 2004.

Piatco's German-based principal investor, Fraport, filed cases at the World Bank's International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington D.C. to recover its $425 million investment.

Piatco brought a separate case for compensation to the Singapore-based International Chamber of Commerce Arbitration Tribunal.

Sereno was part of the legal team headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Florenz D. Regalado that won both cases for the government. The Fraport case was dismissed in 2007 and the Piatco case only last month.

"The bulk of the legal committee was very pleased with the appointment of Madam Sereno so I think we are on the right ground, as presented by the President. Our commitment to good governance is part of it," Lacierda said.

Unquestioned integrity

To her former academia at the UP College of Law, Sereno is a lawyer of unquestioned integrity and the perfect choice for Mr. Aquino.

"Madam's brilliant and her integrity cannot be questioned," said this former student who asked that his name be withheld.

The lawyer recalls how she gave him a failing grade of 4 in a course on bills and notes, one of the toughest subjects in law school.

Sereno eventually gave him a passing mark after he took a second examination.

Another former student, lawyer Joey Tenebroso of the CHC law office, said Sereno was "an eccentric choice."

"Her knowledge of the law is very solid. She has enormous practice, especially in corporate law and public interest advocacy. Most importantly, she has unquestioned integrity and independency of mind," said Tenebroso, who is the lawyer of former Sen. Ahmad Rocco, Mr. Aquino's vice president. He said running mate in the May elections, in his clients' present against Vice President Jejomar Binay.

Like Santiago, Tenebroso said he is hoping that Sereno would go on to become the first female Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Sereno's brother, Jacinto, another former student and colleague at the UP College of Law, is also rooting for Sereno as the first female Chief Justice.

Though Sereno is an academician and a practicing lawyer and has never served as a trial judge, he said what was important for a high court magistrate is to "have a clear philosophy of what the law is," and Sereno has just that.

To said it was a good move to appoint younger magistrates to the high court, especially one with Sereno's credentials.

"She's very hardworking, very prolific, and does a lot of research. She's one of the brightest people in law school," he said.

Economic perspective

A former student who is now Sereno's colleague at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), said Sereno, with her wide experience in international trade law, would bring a necessary "economic perspective" to the high court.

"Her record is impeccable. There are very few lawyers who have won international cases like her," said lawyer Tanya Lee.

Lee is Sereno's chief of staff at the AIM Policy Center of which she now Supreme Court justice is the executive director.

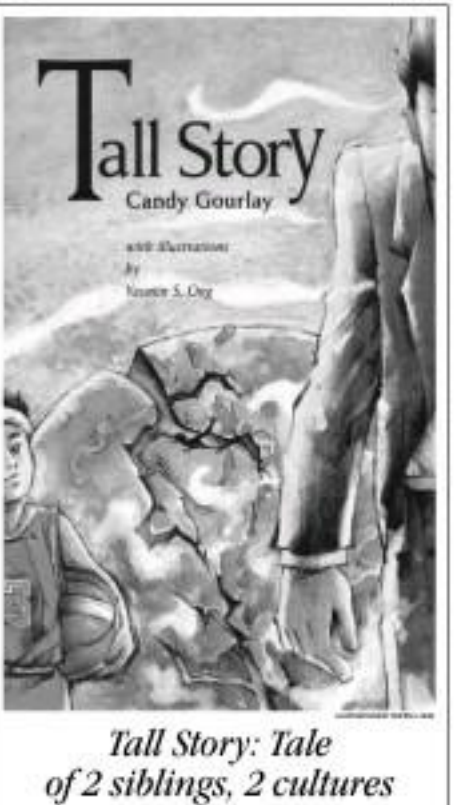
Lee described her boss as a "meticulous worker who gives attention to detail."

"She sets high standards for herself and for those working with," she said.

Sereno is married to Ann Bianic Sereno, executive director of the Association of Development Foundations of the Philippines. The couple have two grown children.

Tall Story: Tale of 2 siblings, 2 cultures

From page A1



Cockpit 'kristo' going . . .

From page A1

...ion a thousand digits, faces and names. Both reach an audience at the Glue Factory's training Center in Batangas. Rita Nina Dilo.

Reporters gave their birth dates and the dynamic duo told them on what day of the week they were born, and on what days they would celebrate their birthdays this year and in 2011.

Not in the honor roll

Ramos, a businessman, used to work as a "tester" or birthday in a cockfighting arena when he was in his late 40s.

He said that also studied, he never made it to the honor roll. In fact, he finished high school in seven, instead of the usual four years.

In between classes and during weekends, he worked as a tester in a cockfighting arena across their house in Marikina.

The birds, so-called because of his penchant for outmoded arena, fail sometimes. David studied chickens, calls the birds, without writing them down or using a computer. Birds are made using a series of hand signals which could mean birds in many or hundreds of thousands of pesos on the cock that is favored to win.

Pandadato or the cock that is loss, popular (ally) pick.

If it is said that artificial fate, everybody always pays up in a cockfight largely because the birds remembers everyone and all their bets.

Good memory

Manila Mayor Benjamin "Benhur" Abalos Jr., who organized the press conference, said this could be why Ramos has a good memory.

"As a child, he was already memorizing names and faces and their bets. He must have developed a system that he could still be using up to now," the mayor said.

For his part, Ramos said there was no such thing as a "poor memory," only an unbiased one.

Acquired talent

Along the way, meanwhile, is a registered nurse. He humbly admitted that his was an acquired talent.

"We were not born with this. We only learned this for years ago," he said adding that had he learned about the memory techniques, he could have passed the nursing board exam with flying colors.

After the card-using mnemonic technique, he "makes a story or image out of the given numbers."

Ramos and Abalos qualified as finalists after completing a battery of tests on the website.

...tion to the London Jaguar of health pasta. "There are various opportunities for baby making along 131 days to time.

...the also vividly contrasts Andi's glib, tenuous connection with Bernardo's disintegrative assemblage. The novel begins to pick up momentum and soon, increasingly shorter but exciting chapters hold the reader in thrall. "Tall Story" moves from scene to shifting, from familiar to the strange even quickly blow of all. Gourlay carries her two protagonists into unfamiliar figures. Readers will want both Andi and Bernardo to somehow find happy endings.

Along the way "Tall Story" touches on what happens to a family when a parent leaves to go abroad to work and how an outsider struggles to fit in in a organized society as well as splashes here and there of helpful facts and fascinating bits of Filipino folklore. Andi struggles to take a place on the ...ean despite her size and Bernardo struggles to fit in, well, basically anywhere he goes.

It's actually heartbreaking just how many words Gourlay juggles like a circus acrobat. The Philippines and England, with ...ence and expectations, real and imaginary, tall and short and, ultimately, the ephemeral and the enchanting.

Gourlay's "Tall Story" is a lovable, accessible tale of two siblings, basketball and realizing the difference between the things that we want the most and the things that we'll treasure.

Gourlay was a reporter and editor of Sth At. Special and then was part of the staff of the original weekly Philippine Inquirer. She is now the London-based correspondent for the Inter Press Service news agency.

"Tall Story" was originally picked up by David Fickling Books and the Philippine edition is exclusively published by Cacho Publishing House with illustrations by Yasmin S. Ong. The book is available at Na...Good Book Store and ...Bookstore.

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NEWS

AMERICAN lawyer Dawn McClary, a cousin of US Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr. and a volunteer in the Obama campaign and USAID, reads a story on saving the earth to kids at the Inquirer Read-Along Saturday. KIDS JOYSON

Lea Salonga, envoy's kin regale kids in read-along

By Kate V Pedroso
Inquirer Research

WORLD renowned artist Lea Salonga and other foreign and local celebrities regaled children with timeless and universal tales in back-to-back Inquirer Read-Along sessions held on Friday and Saturday at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the Inquirer main office in Makati.

In the Friday session, Salonga, who plays "Elphaba" in the currently-running musical "Wicked," read poems from "Lil Elbel's 'Old Peculiar's Book of Practical Jars" together with Australian cast members John O'Hara (Born Fun Biggie) and Lisa-Marie Parker (Girlfriend/Unfriended) at the CCP main theater.

Salonga read "Grandfather's Last Friend" and "Girl Brainstorming" while O'Hara read "The Bun Fun Bugger" and "The Girl Grumbler Cat." Parker read "Dan: The Tweeter Cat."

In the Saturday session, American lawyer Dawn McClary, a cousin of US Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr., led the reading of "Learning to Care for Mother Earth," a story about children learning about renewable energy.

Child stars Bea Binene and Manuel Rubay read Gloria Villaraza Guevara's "Little Hummingy," published by Adarna House. The story follows the adventures of a tiny raindrop, Hummingy, learning nature's water cycle.

Be a hero, save energy

Sophia School storytellers from Mrs. Binene, Bulacan, meanwhile, retold "Eco-Defenders," a story about how children can become heroes in their own right by conserving energy. The story was narrated by Sophia School principal Ana Abacan and teacher Nerry Dorallo, while Sophia School students dressing costumes of the Eco-Defenders—Elsie Beads Lagbas, Mary Grace Colcona and Jaikelyn Pasis—acted out key moments of the story.

A lights-and-sounds performance featuring Sophia School teachers and students dancing to Michael Jackson's "Earth Song" capped the session.

"It was great. The kids were good and seemed very interested, engaged and curious," said McClary, a lawyer with a heart for volunteerism. A volunteer for the Barack Obama campaign in 2008, McClary also volunteered for USAID after arriving in the Philippines six weeks ago. "I worked closely with USAID so we can make the biggest concepts in the story more understandable for children," she said.

'Children like to learn'

McClary is not at all a stranger to storytelling sessions. She related a similar experience in New York, where she also spoke before students to explain law concepts and share life anecdotes.

"Children like to learn and they're always interested in hearing new things," she said.

Binene and Rubay said they both enjoyed their first time at the read-along. "It was fun," said 14-year-old Rubay, who emerged as champion of "Pop Star Kids," a singing contest for children on QTV 11 in 2007. "I think the kids were really intelligent. They had the answers to all the questions."

Six 12-year-old Binene, who appears on new GMA-7 soap "Bamboo," the fun part was interacting with other children. "I remember one time, I participated in a storytelling session and I felt like I was talking to myself," she said. "This time around, I enjoyed the feeling of asking questions and having the kids answer back."

More than 120 students from Makati Elementary School attended the Saturday session, accompanied by their teacher Imelda Jandoc-Mendoza.

One of them was 11-year-old Danielle Christine Garcia, who said that the read-along surpassed her expectations. "This was my first time to attend a session but I had already heard good things about it from my classmates who were able to attend before. I expected the session to be fun but I was happy to realize that it was also interactive and touchy! I was able to make new friends and I have learned a lot of new things," Garcia said.

Favorite reader

When asked who her favorite reader was, Garcia said it was "Ate Lea," or Ms. Salonga. "I liked learning more about climate change and its effects. I learned that in my own little way, I can help. I will definitely segregate my trash and recycle things that I can reuse," she added.

Alex Charlotte Villas, an 11-year-old sixth grader at Ortanez Elementary School, attended the session at CCP on Friday. "It was my first time to attend a session, and I took forward to attending more," she said. "I think this would encourage children like me to read more."

Michell Emma Binuya of Ramon Magsaysay High School in Cubao also attended the Friday session. "The storytellers were very good. I hope I can attend more sessions," said Binuya, a scholar of Laura Vicuña Foundation.

Saturday's session was in cooperation with Hitachi-CCGP which also gave away prizes during the question-and-answer portions. After the session, JobBoss treated the children and their parents to lunch. Inari Cubix and Energon consultants—courtesy of Teleborna Marketing Corp.—were also served after the session.

Fisher's session was in cooperation with Digna Aquino of Library Hub of the Division of Pasig City, Dominican Elementary School, Sr. Mirth Evangelista PMA and the Lee-Ty Vicuña Foundation.

A special read-along session marking the anniversary of Aimee Inquino is scheduled on Aug. 28 at the Museo Pambata in Manila. With reports from Soledad Quesada, Inquirer Research, and Ellen Capuyoan, Inquirer Library

OIC sees shortened stint at Pagasa

By Tarra Quismundo

THE INTERIM chief of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) hopes to leave the weather bureau as soon as he finishes his to-do list in the next three months.

"I don't see myself in Pagasa for a long time. If I finish in two months, I don't see any reason why I should stay," Graciano Yumul Jr., officer in charge (Graciano Yumul Jr.) told the Inquirer yesterday.

Yumul, who is concurrently Department of Science and Technology (DOST) undersecretary for research and development, is assuming the current state of Pagasa and hopes to submit recommendations by the end of his three-month appointment.

He could leave earlier if he finishes the job sooner, said Yumul, adding that he had much to do in his mother unit.

Yumul, a geologist, had briefly served as Pagasa head in 2003 just before the appointment of Dr. Prisco Nilo, a 27-year Pagasa veteran whom he replaced last week in a controversial decision by President Aquino.

Nilo, who bore the brunt of Pagasa's failure to predict that a strong typhoon would be hitting Metro Manila last month, has been moved to a special assignment at the DOST.

Asked how he has been received by old friends at Pagasa, he said they have been "very positive and."

On orders of Science and Technology Secretary Mario Montejo, Yumul will conduct an audit of the official development assistance (ODA) given Pagasa by foreign governments for the procurement of critical weather equipment.

Yumul said he had helped broker some of the ODA deals with the Japanese government's donor agency, the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

"In the first month, we will determine where we are. In the second month, we will have to address the loopholes we see," Yumul said.

He said the state of Pagasa was not as dire as widely perceived, pointing out that equipment for forecasting and communications were already in place. "The equipment are in place, we just have to improve the systems," he said.

In the last month, he will prepare a report on Pagasa's status and submit recommendations that would detail ways to improve the agency.

"These are all in the context of Secretary Montejo's message that we have to have a sense of urgency. But we can't do tomorrow what we can do today by waiting," he said.

Yumul also vowed away from controversy surrounding his appointment, saying that he would rather talk about the rules about data dissemination.

Aplus METRO
Editor Akiko S. Ulanday

Banaue Miclat: Catch a rising star

By DJ Yap

AT THE AGE OF 10, on a family outing up north, Banaue Miclat took in the majestic view of the 2,000-year-old rice terraces carved in the Ifugao mountains and realized the import of her name for the first time.

She understood then the height she must reach to stay true to the name her parents gave her. "There was a sense that 'oh, I have to live up to that,'" she said.

"It was humbling. I saw that it [Banaue Rice Terraces] was much, much bigger than me," the 11-year-old Miclat said.

"My parents [Alma and Mario Miclat] raised me telling me the significance and uniqueness of that name. There was no pressure from them, but I felt it was something I had to live up to."

The way she has lived her life has been a testament to this impossible challenge, from the soaring notes that leave her lips as she sings, to the muscle and percussive strength she used to do as a student of ballet.

Singer, actress, dancer and teacher, Miclat, the 3rd runner, is a member of unions, flitting from one talent to the next, constantly pushing herself to do more, artistically.

Her first performances on stage was as a 9-year-old ballet dancer in "Collocoral '90," a revival with Nonoy Marcelo for Dance Lessons Group-Gregorio's Bora-Lee Ballet.

Epiphany

At the time, it had seemed costly like an expensive hobby that required money for tuition and costumes.

But three years later, appearing as Mia in the Philippine Educational Theater Association's workshop production of "Rainmen" in 1992, Miclat, then 13, had an epiphany of sorts.

"This time, I got a stipend, and I thought, 'hey, I could make a living out of this,'" she said, and decided she wanted to be a performances artist.

Miclat went on to obtain a degree in Theater Arts under the mentorage of theater stalwart and professor emeritus Tony Mabesa at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

On campus, she played memorable characters in various Dulaang UP productions: Desdemona in "Othello," Krista in "Mr. Julito," Hope Jones in "Top Girls," among others.

In 2000, she finished the Master of Fine Arts program in acting in Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. A voice coach told Miclat, a soprano, that she had the potential to be an opera singer.

Quite by providence, a supernecessary position appeared up at the 3,900-seat Opera Company in New York. Miclat aced her audition and won one of five picked for the position. In opera and other performing arts, a supernumerary plays minor roles like acting or dancing in chorus, [but not singing].

"I was very lucky because the Met doesn't always do opera productions. There were five of us out of 90," she said, adding that she was chosen because she was "quick" at getting directions.

"Ito 'Butterfly,' sa'n sasa'n told that when Sabrina enters a room, you needed to have a connection with her," she said.

Miclat was so good at connecting with the actress who played Sabrina that they co-headlined her role on the win in the scene from beginning to end.

"Everybody says just counting and going, and I was always there to support Sabrina. I was the one who put a robe on her in one scene that required her to get naked briefly," she said.

Miclat also performed in other productions like "La Bohème," "La Traviata" and "Orsat," where she played a bourgeois, a lunatic, and French all in the same night.

She said her experience at the Met was "humbling" because it taught her that no role was too small or too big for people who were serious about their craft.

The work ethic of theater assistants in New York and those in Manila is pretty much the same, Miclat said. "It has the same discipline. It really depends on the individual. Even if your role is small, it doesn't mean you don't do research more, or you don't less others," she said.

One difference was that in New York, the actors are forced to reveal all their angst and anguish, and to "rip off the Band-Aid" of their worst and innermost demons.

In Miclat's case, she had to finally come to grips with a family tragedy that she had been hiding from for years. In 2000, her sister Mendigoring, a shining light to the visual arts and literature, committed suicide.

"I wasn't able to cry for two years," said Miclat. "I had to stay strong for my parents. But when I studied in the US, it came to a point where I realized I had to take care of myself. Up to now, it's a continuous healing process," she said.

Fear of death

Miclat said the thing she feared most was "death, my own death, especially if it comes before my parents."

"I can't imagine seeing my parents' agony if they lose another child. That fear of death makes me take care of myself. I have to always make sure I'm safe," she said.

Performance artists often lead lives where there is drama inside as much as there is outside, Miclat said. "Definitely when I was younger, I had to feel a lot of things, and this showed in my performances. But after going through a lot of tragedy, I've had enough," she said.

Ethan Iramaeen Miclat the most absent but line of work is it's harder to place us in a play. We could look Latin American, at the same time, Asian. They say Chinese is the new black. When they need to put one black man in productions, it's now one Chinese or Japanese or Korean," she said.

Which is why in her résumé, Miclat, who lived part of her young life in China with her parents, puts in her "ethnic versatility": Hawaiian, Native American, Filipino, Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Spanish, and Latin.

MICLAT: Payback time after making the heights.

Giving back

These days, Miclat is busy preparing for the upcoming production "Banaag at Sikat," a rock musical based on work of novelist Lope K. Santos, to be held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Little Theater from Aug. 19-29.

She is also teaching acting classes at the theater de Manila University and UP Diliman.

Miclat said it was actually her artist that prompted her to quit performing as the Met indefinitely. "I felt it was time for me to give back," she said.

To the aspiring performance artist, Miclat had a piece of advice: "If it's your passion, go for it."

But life in theater is a hand-me-and it does not always pay the bills, she said. Artists may have to wear more on popular media like film and television like she did, dabbling in TV as well as acting in indie films.

"Like many others, I wanted to be the best, the most famous, but you reach a point when being part of something that's been nominated is enough to make you feel you've achieved something great," Miclat said.

ADVANCED contributions to the Pag-ibig Fund as a precondition for overseas work may be illegal. —Vice President Jejomar Binay

GLOBAL Pinoy
Cita Moreno Feria

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Lessons in courage in Baton Rouge

DARING DUO FOR MIGRANT TEACHERS' RIGHTS The American Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers and other support groups helped the Filipino teachers file early this month a class action suit for trafficking and racketeering against their recruiters. Universal Placement International. At ceremonies where the Filipino teachers were given the AFT's 2010 International Humanist Award (from left to right): AFT national officer John Eas; Aileen Hernaiz of the Baltimore Teachers Union, an AFT union; AFT legal officer Daniel Mehlist; Hani Nasrat Tarazie of the Louisiana Teachers Union; Lee Saravia, LFL liaison officer; Patricia Hanggaypao Cyrnika, representative of the California Teachers Union; Ingrid Cruz; Louisiana Teachers Union president Steve Monaghan; Annie Laurie of the Public Services Labor Independent Confederation or PSLABC; and Maria Angela of the Washington Teachers Union, also an AFT union

Filipino teachers in Louisiana learned about migrant rights the hard way. But they also discovered that the spirit of 'bayanihan' was global

AT FIRST they were fearful and embarrassed to admit that they had gotten themselves into a situation of "virtual slavery." Complaints of human trafficking and debt bondage are more likely to come from uneducated domestic workers in the Middle Eastern kingdoms—not from Filipino teachers in the United States of America.

But for a chance to work in the US, the teachers, over 500 of them, had coughed up over P700,000 (about $15,000) each to a California-based employment placement company and its local recruitment partner. Some of them hocked their homes to raise the placement money. Those who couldn't produce in time cash were referred to partner lending agencies that charged them compounding interests of 43 to 80 percent. To their chagrin, the firms and agencies' demands, which included 30 percent of their salaries for two years, did not stop even after they got there. They were also overcharged for rent and visa renewals. Their travel and working papers were in the hands of the agency, and when they complained or asked too many questions, the recruiter reportedly shouted at them and threatened to send them home.

It was like a indentureship trap, teachers claimed. "We were hooked into a path, a slowly constricting path, where the steadiest pay realized that something was not right, you were already past the point of no return," said Ingrid Jimenez Cruz, who began her overseas teaching stint in 2007.

The subjects of the teachers' complaints are Universal Placement International (UPI), owned by one Lourdes "Lulu" Navarro, its Philippine-based partner, PMN Recruitment, run by Navarro's relatives, Emilie Villeche, and some officers of the East Baton Rouge school system in Louisiana, where many of them were assigned.

It began with a blog

Their struggle to free themselves began with a blog. After months of silence, a few of the teachers launched in the first week of September 2008 www.pinayteacher-abah.blogspot.com, where they posted "An Open Letter to Our Fellow Filipina Migrant Teachers." They found drawn their complaints and invited others to air their views.

No one dared list their real names. They were by the ages "Gayong Sulong," "Sing ng Tubo," "Dalaga Kilikod," "Walang Takot," among others.

Discovering their strength

After one nerve-racking at the end of that week, Sing ng Tubo wrote: "This day is a special day. I am looking for something and did not even realize I had... I almost gave up. But then I started to clean my brain, my apprehensions, my anger, my agonies. Suddenly others did the same. Sharing. Gradually, they let loose. Connecting. Advising each other's wounds... Then, out of nowhere, something struck me. Suddenly, I realized that I finally found what I was looking for... my strength."

For the next few weeks, the blog was also used to research material. Overcharging of fees, they learned, was a violation of the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995. It was also against regulations in the state they were assigned to recollect fees in advance.

Anger and rage

Some of the teachers initially resisted with rage. "Damn. Lilibis back West and her minions happen to be working for their Caribbean-based recruiter! Just love to make our lives a living hell...I wonder how they sleep at night...Having charged so many so much above the cancel placement fee that's given them the label of resident public enemy! I wonder how they sleep at night," more expletives peppered the authors, which was signed, "Organic Chapin."

The anger unloaded. The blog posts on Nov. 10 and 11 talked of the need for unity and action. "We are a small case but with our combined strength, we can surely stop this system now down," wrote Gayong Bohol.

Others acknowledge that they were "modern day slaves," wrote Gayong Gala on Nov. 11. But healing, she added, would come by "claiming [our] justice." Sing ng Tubo or "Lulu" was posted on Nov. 13. The teachers had awakened Lulu about the overcharged rent. They figured that Navarro, still, a migrant (even charge) of $500 per apartment (they assigned at least 40 apartments), four teachers could start repaying at least $12,000 a month from them. They were able to bring down their per-head rate from $1,600 to $875.

They also forced down the charges for visa renewals from $1400 to $2000 per individual, to $1,680.

There were changes in addition to the millions she collected from them before they left. She was also paid about $47,000 by the East Baton Rouge school system for the recruitment service.

A libel suit

Navarro had threatened to sue the teachers for libel for damaging her reputation. "Make my day!" wrote Organic Chapin. "We are just exercising our right to free expression," wrote others.

"Who is Lulu Navarro?" an opposing poster asked. The group had discovered that Navarro had been convicted of and imprisoned for defrauding the California Medi-Cal system of more than a million dollars. She also pleaded guilty to money laundering in New Jersey.

By this time, the teachers' blog had started attracting pledges of support from other groups. On Nov. 26, the blog featured a statement on migrant rights from the Manila-based Partido ng Manggagawa. On Dec. 6, a statement of support from the Filipino Americans Association of Greater Baton Rouge appeared on the blog.

Christmas gloom

There seemed to be a deign of depression as the Christmas season neared. "We had a taste of a white Christmas last week, but the fun just melted so fast...It's hard to have a merry Christmas if your pockets are empty and we can't even send enough pasalubong (Christmas goodies) to loved ones," Gala wrote.

Also, the debate over what was to be done was heating up.

"Extortionist Teacher" posted evidentiary arguments. Should not all the "victims" they were claiming lead to their losing their jobs? "Many Filipinos in the US started with a lot worse situations than we have now. Out of sheer years of perseverance and patience, they reaped their successes in the end," said the blog get.

Think about your jobs

Anonymous Teacher reminded the others that nobody had forced them into signing Navarro's contract. "Your financial difficulty is a product of your own decision. You did whatever had to be done. There are consequences in your own actions. [That] business is business...A contract is a contract. It is a mutual agreement," the author stressed. For the privilege of coming to America, some thanks more due to Navarro, the post said.

Themed Incognegrous Teacher: "Employers do not want drama...Think about your own actions, guys. I suggest that you just work and improve your employee within your job description...I hope you will not lose your job. Your family will suffer very badly as a result."

Stand up or turn a blind eye?

The teachers' hell was about over Christmas. At the end of the year, Dec. 29, Gayong Sulong posted the blog's most reflective words:

It is true, she began, that a contract is a contract. But, she argued, "A contract as a mutual agreement can only be enforced if it is not contrary to law." "Clearly," she pointed out, "there are some provisions in the contract that are contestable and could be voided."

As for being business like and professional, "We are not asking for charity," she said. "We simply want to be treated fairly and professionally." Deference to Filipino values of pagtitis and pagtitiyaga (enduring suffering, or abuse), or saying na lang sandali (enough, she argued, has been out of place).

"Most of it came from modest backgrounds too and we know what pagbabanat (hardship) means. I agree there are many Filipinos who underwent greater hardships. But that is not a reason to turn a blind eye to oppression. There is no logic in that assertion...just because others experienced more hardships, therefore it's ok for us to be subjected to abuses...[That] in effect is condoning illegal and corrupt activities."

As for their jobs, Gayong Sulong argued that include, it would be hard to separate teaching from their struggle.

"As teachers we mold children. And how can we mold them to be strong, freedom loving citizens if we ourselves cannot stand up against tyranny. How can we teach them the bravery of Mother Lidlid Kiag, the resolve of Maharaiam Lontoc, the visionary advocacy of Mark Twain, if we don't even marshal in their messages?"

She concluded, "Do not equate standing up against injustice as something negative or unbecoming or be ashamed of. The bedrock of this very economy is in fact the struggle for equality, freedom, fairness and justice."

• • •

On Sept. 30, 2009 the teachers, backed by the Louisiana Federation of Teachers (LFT), filed a complaint with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and the US Department of Labor seeking remedies against UPI for violations of their employment service regulations.

On April 30, 2010, the LWC ruled that UPI had charged the teachers certain fees which were prohibited and prematurely ended their contracts, and ordered it to repay the Filipino teachers $1.6 million in illegally charged fees.

UPI, through their lawyer, was quoted in US publications as saying it would appeal the decision.

On Aug. 3, 2010 the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), with the LFT, the immigrant justice project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, and private law firm Lovinger and Hurting LLP filed a "landmark" civil racketeering class action lawsuit on behalf of fourteen and other similarly situated individuals.

A+ for bravery

In April 2008, Cruz and other officers received the International Humanist Award from the AFT, with high commendations for their "personal courage, willingness to speak up and to believe in collective action."

Cruz, president of the newly formed Filipino Educators Federation of Louisiana, thanked the American teachers for supporting them.

"A few years ago, we were voiceless, vulnerable and scared. Today we are organized and will never be silent again about our human and labor rights...Standing tall, we can say we have learned our lessons well, at every step of the journey that led to this award."

With their literature out, leagues, she said, they also discovered the true spirit of bayanihan—cherished Filipino value of community betterment and cooperation. The teachers persevered, the AFT with a painting showing the Undefeated Bayanihan, wherein neighbors and friends together hoist a new community members' house on their shoulders to bring it to a better place.

Mlvera

Mlvera may be reached at love@inicia.com or at 687 7177.

Migrant retirees have problems with SSS and GSIS pensions

IMFO
Lourdes Santos Jaucian

AN IMMIGRANT residing in California recently contacted me and asked to explore how a dispute over her inability to obtain her retirement benefits from the Social Security System. Her letter reads:

"I have been a registered nurse (RN) member of the SSS since 1980... In January 1980, I retired early from my job at the Central Bank's facility in Iloilo City to migrate to the US. Now that I'm old, I asked my son to apply for my retirement benefits, but the SSS branch in Cloverpine City is giving us a hard time. They even said my name was no longer in their system.

"I'm only claiming what is duly mine. Any amount will be very helpful for my family and relatives in the Philippines and it is my plan to spend my remaining years in our homeland. What should I do?"

The same grievance was also expressed by the daughter of a long-time US immigrant for GSIS benefits. She said her 80-year-old mother went back to the Philippines on personality errand to her application for retirement. She was asked to go to Manila just to find out that her benefits were reportedly being paid to a "third party" unrelated to her. Mrs. "T" resorted to the GSIS main office.

Further inquiries with the Philippine Consulate office revealed that Mrs. "T" was reported as a deceased claimant and so an unrecognition individual had taken her retirement benefits.

Here is an address the difficulties encountered by immigrants who live abroad in obtaining their pensions? When will all these difficulties and fraudulent transactions be put to a stop, and the government institutions be made more sensitive to the rights of their members?

Immigrants deserve better

Addressing the concerns of immigrant senior citizens in the US is a big challenge, especially when they express their emotional outrage to the native. When Mrs."T" the retired teacher, heard the news that she had been declared "deceased," she almost suffered a heart attack. She is still fuming as the "Fraudulent" claim on benefits due her.

The latter senator seeking assistance in seeking her SSS benefits says the amount she expects will not even be for herself but for her relatives in the Philippines who are more in need. Hence, the amount involved is not the significant factor. Immigrants in their senior years also plan to return someday and want to remain united in the homeland. Their hope of even a meager pension signifies more than the amount to be received.

Listening to P-Noy's State of the Nation Address gave us a sense of hope. When he said we could dream "again," we took it to heart that this new leader was including all of us who remain connected to the homeland despite our being overseas.

The GSIS or SSS, honorary votes not among the fatalities that were put on the spot during P-Noy's speech. However, it is public knowledge that there is rampant corruption and inefficiency in these institutions as well. It becomes more challenging because they are tasked to deal with claims of seniors and immigrants—overseas Filipinos who send billions of dollars in remittances every month. They deserve better.

Imfo may be reached at love@inicia.com or at 687 7177.

Gilda Lorraine B. Santos

The WORLD

Obama backs plan to build mosque near Ground Zero

WASHINGTON—US President Barack Obama has waded into a bitter controversy over a plan by Muslims to build a mosque just blocks from Ground Zero, endorsing the project on religious freedom grounds.

"As a citizen, and as president, I believe that Muslims have the same right to practice their religion as anyone else in this country," Obama said late Friday.

"That includes the right to build a place of worship and a community center on private property in lower Manhattan, in accordance with local laws and ordinances."

Obama's remarks, delivered at a White House Iftar meal for Muslims breaking their Ramadan fast, were the president's first on the controversial project, which has become a test of tolerance for Islam in post-9/11 America and sparked a national debate on freedom of religion.

Intended to include a mosque, sports facilities, theater, restaurant and possibly a daycare, the multistory Islamic center would be open to all visitors to demonstrate that Muslims are part of their community, planners say.

But the proposed location, two blocks from the gaping Ground Zero hole, where the Twin Towers were destroyed on September 11, has touched raw nerves.

Obama acknowledged that the site where the World Trade Center towers once stood remains "hallowed ground," and that 9/11 attacks "were a deeply traumatic event for our country."

But he said American values required that all religious groups be treated equally and fairly.

"This is America, and our commitment to religious freedom must be unshakeable. The principle that people of all faiths are welcome in this country, and will not be treated differently by their government, is essential to who we are."

New York City has approved plans for the lower Manhattan building to be turned into a mosque and an interfaith venue called "Cordoba House."

But hearings on whether the construction should be allowed prompted furious exchanges, with opponents accusing rabbis of racism and Islamophobia, and supporters assessing the plans weighed the enormity of the 3,000 victims of the 9/11 attacks.

Applause erupted when a New York city commission unanimously approved the project on Aug. 3, but others shouted "shame," and waved signs reading "Islam builds mosques on the sites of their conquests."

Obama acknowledged the "pain and suffering experienced by those who lost loved ones is unimaginable," but he called on Americans to "always remember who we are fighting against, and what we are fighting for."

"Al Qaeda's cause is not Islam...it is a gross distortion of Islam," the president said. "In fact, al Qaeda has killed more Muslims than people of any other religion—and that list of victims includes innocent Muslims who were killed on 9/11."

AFP

Abused woman given US asylum

SAN FRANCISCO—A Mexican woman who claimed she was beaten and raped for decades by her common-law husband has won the right to stay in the United States in a case that experts say makes clear that domestic violence is valid grounds for asylum.

The Department of Homeland Security found that the case of the woman, identified only as L.R., met the stringent standard necessary to win asylum. An immigration judge found in her favor on Aug. 4, and the decision was announced this week by her attorneys.

"The point has been made, very loud and clear, that cases such as these involving domestic violence, and even more broadly, gender-based violence against women, are valid cases," said Karen Musalo, L.R.'s attorney and the head of Hastings Law School's Center for Gender and Refugee Studies at the University of California. The name of the applicant was withheld to protect her privacy.

What makes this case remarkable is that, traditionally, asylum has been given to individuals being persecuted by a government; applicants had to show they suffered persecution because of their religion, political beliefs, race, nationality or membership in a particular social group. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Newly found fault caused Haiti quake

INDIANAPOLIS—The devastating earthquake that rocked Haiti in January was unleashed by a previously undetected fault line—not the well-known one initially blamed, according to an analysis of new data. Its unclear how dangerous the new, unmapped fault might be or how it's discovery changes the overall earthquake hazard risk for Haiti, said Eric Calais, a professor of geophysics at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. He said the analysis shows that most, if not all, of the geologic movement that caused January's magnitude-7.0 earthquake occurred along the newly discovered fault, not the well-documented Enriquillo fault. AP

US approves emergency contraceptive

NEW YORK—The US Food and Drug Administration on Friday approved the sale over-the-counter of emergency contraceptive pill, which prevents pregnancy if taken within five days of unprotected intercourse or contraceptive failure. The prescription-only drug, which has been available in Europe since the 1990s, is a comprehensive approval antagonist that is thought to work by inhibiting or delaying ovulation, according to a statement from the FDA. The agency said that side effects noted with ella are similar to those of other emergency contraceptives already approved and include headache, abdominal pain, nausea, pain in the pelvis, and during menstruation (dysmenorrhea), fatigue and dizziness. The drug, manufactured by Paris-based Laboratoires HRA Pharma, is not recommended for women who are pregnant or think they might be pregnant or for women who are breast-feeding. AFP

Rain cools Moscow but wildfires still burn

MOSCOW—Heavy downpours cooled the Russian capital after weeks of no rain and unprecedented heat, but dozens of wildfires still raged around Moscow and a new blaze was spotted near the country's top nuclear research center. The city remains largely free of the clouds of suffocating smog that afflicted it earlier, but environmentalists say smoke from burning forests and peat bogs may choke the city over the weekend if the wind direction changes. More than 500 wildfires were continuing to burn across the country, including 29 around Moscow, it said about 14,000 firefighters were battling blazes around the Russian capital. AP

Pakistan floods fail to spark strong global aid

ISLAMABAD—The global aid response to the Pakistan floods has so far been much less generous than to other recent natural disasters—despite the soaring numbers of people affected and the prospect of more economic ruin in a country key to the fight against Islamist militants. The figures include the relatively low death toll (1,200, the other end of the flooding compared with more immediate and dramatic earthquakes or tsunamis, and a global "donor fatigue"—or at least a Pakistan fatigue. AP

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WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Alaska goes for the kill /A22

■ RP five whips Iran, forges semis clash with Lebanon /A23

Eagles sweep UP Maroons; Archers score

By Jasmine W. Paye

EMMAN MONFORT had been showing crack form in practice. Yesterday, the diminutive Ateneo guard flashed his deadly shooting for everyone to see.

Monfort unloaded 15 of his 23 points from beyond the arc as the Blue Eagles rolled past the University of the Philippines Maroons, 79-59, to grab a share of second in the 73rd UAAP men's basketball tournament yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

"Emman has been showing the light out in practice," said Ateneo coach Norman Black. "That's one of the reasons why if you're going to play a team, he's probably going to be on the floor."

Monfort, the smallest player on court at 5-foot-6, shone in Ateneo's early step to set a career-high in points on top of six rebounds, five assists and four steals.

Ateneo joined idle Adamson at 6-2, just a game behind the 7-1 record of league-leading De La Salle University.

Another guard stepped up for La Salle as rookie Almond Vinoya joined the Green Archers in a 93-56 triumph over the National U Bulldogs in the second game.

The 5-9 Vinoya knocked in 16 points, including two clutch free throws with 7.3 seconds left after the Bulldogs rallied within a point, 57-56.

"It's a good experience for us to win close games," said coach Jerrie Pumaren, whose Archers kept fourth place with a 5-3 slate.

"It was difficult because they had (Ateneo)star Emmanuel Mbe and their veteran guys can create, penetrate and dish out. So I told them that it's important that we prove we deserve here."

Jhaiam Atkins hauled nine of his 13 points from three-point range and also fired six boards, while rookie center Pogoy Paredes delivered six points, six rebounds and four blocks.

The Bulldogs fell to 3-5, while the Maroons skidded to their eight straight loss.

La Salle sealed the victory with Vinoya's free throws off a clear foul from Joseph Terso, who fueled the Bulldogs' comeback in the last four minutes.

The Bulldogs, who tripped the Archers 89-55, in the first round, had a chance to forge overtime, but Melvin Rabano missed the potential game-tying triple at the buzzer.

The Archers built an eight-point lead, 53-45, before Melvin Rabano and Terso capped 10-3 comeback with back-to-back buckets that pushed the Bulldogs within a point, 57-56, with 13.3 seconds left.

Ateneo logged the highest number of teams in the last three years with 26, nine coming from Isla Salumat. The previous high was 23 by La Salle against Adamson in 2007.

Justin Chan added 16 markers and Ryan Pascual posted a double-double of 12 points and 10 rebounds to help the defending champion Eagles complete an elimination sweep of the Maroons.

In Juniors' action, the Blue Eagles clenched their unbeaten run to nine games after a 101-60 rout of the University of the East Junior Warriors yesterday at the UAAB-Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Kiefer Ravena delivered an all-around game of 21 points, nine rebounds, eight assists and seven steals for the Eaglets.

Jozel Jumapao led a balanced charge with 14 points as the Bullpups clobbered the Junior Maroons, 79-50, to keep second place at 7-2.

BULLDOZER Ateneo's Joseph Yeo muscles Rob Ilisaliti boxed in by a La Salle double team under the basket. AUGUST MIRAFLOR DELA CRUZ

UP remained winless in nine outings, while UE fell to 1-8.

Scoreboard

First Game

ATENEO 79... Monfort 23, Oftana 10, Buenafe 11, Ildefonso 2, Tiu, Cruz 5, Lotilla 4, Long 2, Ayaka 2, Tenorio 6, Ersan 2, Torres 2, Chan 16, Zamora 2, Garcia 0

UP 59... Rivero 20, Co 12, Olayon 11, Dizon 10, Pedro 6, Ilisaliti 0, Rabano 0, Mendoza 0, Jamisola 0, Gotladera 0

Quarters: 21-16, 37-28, 51-41, 79-59

Second Game

LA SALLE 93... Hondrade 30, Mbe 13, Pascual 9, Verde 8, Pinto 6, Vinoya 5, Lim 4, Torres 4, Salazar 4, Chapel 2, Desiderio 2, Pedrosa 2, Arcangel 1, Ildefonso 0, Dadia 0, Tungcab 0, Nogar 0, Mangahas 0

Quarters: 16-12, 37-25, 65-36, 93-56

High hopes for Jeson in doubles

JESON PATRONCINIO, who faces a tough field in the boys' singles, drew a former world No. 1 as partner in the doubles of the first ever Youth Olympic Games which started last night in Singapore.

The 17-year-old from Digos City ranked 42nd in the world, will take on China's top player Boni Ouyang in the opening round of the singles today at the Kallang Tennis Center.

Patroncinio will later team up with former world No. 1 Yuki Bambri of India in the doubles where they face the fourth seeded tandem from Croatia and Bosnia.

"We are fortunate to get Bambri as his partner. I think we have a strong chance for a medal here," said Patroncinio's coach coach, former RP Davis Cupper Manny Tecson.

He said Patroncinio's singles draw is made tough players like Hungary's Marton Fucsovics, the recent winner of the Wimbledon junior singles, and Bambri himself, the 2009 Australian Open singles champion.

Patroncinio, according to Tecson, have been spending the whole day in the training venue since arriving in Singapore four days ago.

Tecson said Jeson practically in the courts training the entire day to get accustomed to the new courts and the humidity here in Singapore. He are getting stronger and I believe we will be 100 percent ready come competition day," he said.

However, Tecson said that the opening ceremony, set to begin at 7 p.m. last night, would have been too late for the athletes.

Marc Anthony Reyes

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Alaska goes for the kill

Confident Aces try to finish off Beermen

By Codel P. Tupaz

ALASKA HOPES that a season littered with heartbreak will end in glory tonight as the Aces take the first of three cracks at the PBA Philippine Cup crown against San Miguel Beer at the Araneta Coliseum.

Swept by Purefoods in the All-Filipino Cup finals, the Aces try to finish the season on a winning note when they tangle with the Beermen again at 6 p.m. in Game 1 of the best-of-seven showdown.

Alaska, which took the first two games before absorbing a blowout loss in Game 3, moved on the brink of winning the Commissioner's Cup trophy for the seventh season by subduing San Miguel, 98-83, in Game 4 Friday night.

History favors the Aces clinching the series with only two out of 33 teams in the league coming back from a 3-1 hole to steal a best-of-seven series.

"The mentality is that we are not going to go for it," said Alaska coach Tim Cone, whose Aces needed seven games to dispose of Talk 'N Text in the semifinals, after surviving Ginebra in the protest in the quarterfinals.

"We're a confident team. We've been through the process. We know how to respond from bad losses and we're hoping to play back-to-back games."

THE beginnings of a curtain bark here on Alaska coach Tim Cone's mouth. Cone was called for a technical on the play after vehemently protesting an offensive foul on Ace import Dion Simpson. But the playfirst up Alaska, which can finish off San Miguel Beer tonight.

The Aces finished with a flourish in Game 4, outscoring the Brewmen, 14-3, during a 10-minute stretch in the first period.

But San Miguel coach Leo Austria believes, who is unbeaten in three finals appearances, remained defiant.

"We can come up," Austria promised.

Tenorio said that Game 5 is an opportunity for the Brewmen to close their true character.

"It's not an ideal situation but that's the reality of it," said Tenorio. "I'm still confident for the opportunity [to try] turn this around."

Jun Mignel is hoping for a better performance from Jay Washington, who earned as Best Player of the Conference, who struggled with just five points Friday night after averaging close to 20 points in the first three games of the series.

"It's a matter of perspective. Yes, we're on a 3-1 hole. When you're down like this, you'll see what people are made of," Tenorio said.

"Either you fold up or show your true character."

While the import have proven steady in the series, Alaska's solid support crew has gotten the better of its San Miguel counterparts.

Aces import Washington, Jeo De Vesta, Cyrus Baguio and Tony dela Cruz put the clamps on Washington, diverted him to, Danny Ildefonso and Romeo Travis to Game 3, haven that Cone pointed out as crucial to his team getting the commanding series lead.

Cone said stopping Perasion, who had 28 points and 17 rebounds in Game 4, will always be a "tough order."

But the Alaska coach has found solace in the fact that his reinforcement, the hard-nosed Dionne Simpson, has been up to the task in the series.

"Dionne has been the steadying factor all the way through these playoffs. I have the advantage with him," Cone said of his 22-year-old import whom, he revealed, has been getting offers from the European League.

NU spikers target last V-League q'final slot

NATIONAL U goes for a repeat victory today when it tangles with Perpetual Help in a playoff for the last quarterfinal berth in the Shakey's V League Season 7 second conference at the FEUI Flying V arena in San Juan.

The Lady Bulldogs have the psychological edge in the 2 p.m. meeting with the Lady Altas, owing to their impressive sweeps on every in the elimination round.

Jau Sebastian and Salamoun duo at 6 p.m. in a match considered as a preview of the finals.

The Lady Stags, holding a league-leading 8-1 card, are out to avenge their loss last to against the Lady Falcons, who boast one of the most experienced lineups in the league.

Led by former University of Santo Tomas standout Diadie Santiago, the Lady Bulldogs got off to a rising start in their debut courtesy to the VI 25-23, 25-23, 25-20 sweeping two of their five Game matches.

But they have gone on to lose their last four games, including a 14-25, 22-25, 24-26 defeat to Arellano that relegated the Lady Bulldogs to the knockout round.

Santiago finished with 10 unanswered flashes of brilliance in the elimination round, beating Adamson and St. Benilde.

But in their only duel with the Lady Bulldogs, the Lady Altas offered rookie resistance and fell to 14-25, 20-25, 22-25 loss.

"We really want to make an impact in this league and we're not here just for winning," said Perpetual coach Miguel Rabat.

Jau Sebastian kept a spotless record until running into a window Adamson squad, which came away with a thrilling 16-25, 26-28, 25-23, 25-25, 15-13, victory two weeks ago.

The explosive duo of Aring Bautista and Jessica Salamoun will battle Jau Sebastian against Salamoun, which will be led by Nerissa Soreno and Michelle Laborte. Codel P. Tupaz

Chiefs' 6-foot-1 center is week's best

By Codel P. Tupaz

IT'S EASY to dismiss Arellano center Gerald Lopez as a flavor on the Darkhawk because of his lowly frame.

But do a game where the Chiefs assembled to break Letran's grasp and needed the extra man to finish in transition, the undersized center delivered.

The 6-foot-1 Lopez posted 29 points mostly on Darkhawk lay-ups to power Arellano to a come-from-behind 75-76 victory over Letran in the MBL PEZA basketball tournament Friday.

"We expect him to have a game like this," said Arellano coach Leo Isaac, whose squad has been anchored several games by Lopez when he was still playing in the ACSAT in the NCRAA.

"Maybe with this performance, he can get the recognition he deserves."

Lopez, who earned the Aced/YSM/NCAA Player of the Week award, also grabbed 16 rebounds in one of the best individual performances of the season.

Among those who were considered for the player of the week honor presented by Gatorade and Smithkline were Jun Sebastian's Cubao Xbasers and Ronald Pascual and Jam Sacdalan's Indian Inasal.

What made Lopez's performance even more remarkable was the fact that he missed just two of his 14 attempts from the field in 29 minutes.

FEU lasses cruise to Petron semis

LINGAYEN—Two teams from Far Eastern University handled tough opposition and reached the semifinal round of the third leg of the 2018 Petron Lasther beach volleyball tournament here.

Shaira Bermudez and new teammate Abdul-Ala Al-Bachir Hashem Alyssa and Eliza Abad, 21-15, at the mid-point of the provincial capitol grounds here.

The other FEU duo of Jessica Bolasconda and Lovely Ramirez also reached the last 4.

It was the fourth consecutive win for Cerain A for Gonzales and De La Peña losing to top qualifiers and defending champions Jeanine Hermoso and Sanchel Soraya of La Salle-Dasmariñas, 21-19, Friday.

Hermoso and Soraya topped Group 4 after sweeping all five group matches.

Sarah Jane Hernandez grabbed the second semifinal seat in Group B after nosing University of the East members Rochelle Nunez and Catherine Nikolaos, 21-7.

Rising Heat

SOARING HEAT coach Erik Spoelstra's visit to the Philippines launched the huge knowledge of kids who attended his basketball clinics and boosted the marketability of artificial teams whose games he watched.

His arrival also boosted the stock of Miami Heat Sparkling Jade, Proline Sports Center reported. Retailers of Spoelstra's Filipino roots and the union of Dwyane Wade, LeBron James and Chris Bosh in Miami. Proline expects Heat fever to surpass the sales of those of the Lakers and Celtics.

SPOELSTRA

Leviste stuns dressage field

MEDAL A new record in an unfamiliar event powered an Azerbaijan Philippine equestrienne from Levista as she surpassed overseas campaigners in the team Dressage Champion League during the Merdeka Women's field in Bintang, Malaysia.

Levista, a three jumping specialist who had never been in the Malaysian Open or issued here name, Gladys Phillippine Jan Jewels, triumphed on board PAB, a 14-year-old Dutch bred dressage horse owned by Carina Cassilla before a teamed award in the IQ Equestrian Center.

Adding a new chapter to her 20-year-old equestrian career, Levista, born in 2000, Asian Games dressage silver medalist and three-time team and individual SEA Games champion Quirel Arabak with a score of 66.75 percent. The Malaysian favorite scored 65.31 percent.

"I am so stunned as everyone else," said Levista. "I never expected to do well, more so win over my friend [a fellow] in dressage, since he is a multinational dressage rider, and undoubtedly the best in the region."

Dressage is one of three disciplines in equestrian sports held during major regional and world championships. The other two are eventing and jumping.

TOP: Levista aboard PAB during the Malaysian tournament.

Levista was forced to ride PAB after Ukabe Pharisian Jun Jewels suffered a tendon injury after the Malaysian Open. Levista decided to retire Ukabe Pharisian from competition on a winning note.

Goodbody, a long-time Philippine Equestrian Team patron, assigned Levista to enter in dressage event with Goodbody's PAB.

Though she wasn't sure how Levista and PAB would fare in the competition against seasoned pairs, Goodbody's 66 confident that Levista and her horse would deliver a decent performance.

"A month ago, PAB had an accident during an transport from the Netherlands to Malaysia, which he lost his entire tail due to an infection," said Goodbody. "For a dressage horse, where beauty and poise are ultimately scored, this situation is considered extremely disadvantageous."

Goodbody's worry turned out to be unfounded as Levista and PAB rode in harmony to earn the nod of FEI (Federation Equestre Internationale) judges Jan Bird of New Zealand and Mary Hamm of Germany, both of whom will work the dressage event at the Asian Games in Guangzhou, China, in November.

The King of Malaysia, his Majesty Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin, who is an avid equestrian himself, and the Queen, Tuanku Nur Zahirah were the guests of honor during the four-day Merdeka Masters competition. Ito Lanuza

Team CATS flies Down Under

TEAM CATS Manson Ros will today to seek the overall title in the Mercedes-Trophy Regional Final which begins Aug. 16 at The Links, Hope and Glade courses in Queensland, Australia.

Pia Philippine squad, spearheaded by his games Israel Nito Ang, is gunning for the country's maiden triumph and is looking to make a big impact in the Mercedes-Trophy, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Nito Chang, Emmanuel Abad, Steve de Leon, John Lim, Augusto Cua, Ricardo Bolador and Lucille Cardoso form the Team CATS roster for the Mercedes-Trophy.

The Team CATS members, who earned their spots after topping the National Final, will be battling nine other country finalists from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam and Hong Kong.

"It will be a sweet victory if we do make it all the way," said Ang, president of the CATS Motors, Inc.

The team is flying to Australia via Philippine Airlines. Shell Nitro, PLDT/Smart, Rivera Metro (official outfitter), TW Steel and Impact Gear Shooters are the sponsors.

FALCONS BACKER Coach Leo Austria and his scoring Adamson Falcons got a big boost after partnering with Foogo para recently. Evelyn Santiago (3rd from left), Marketing Services manager of Foogo, and Fr. Gregorio Ronaga, president of Adamson, shake hands after concluding the deal. Present also are Foogo director Ed Austria, Bud Aguas, ADEA director Tex Dalig, Old director and Ms. Lolie Ilao of the Office for Athletics Recreation.

YOG request gets flak

ON THE eve of the 19th MVP Awards presentation, Atenas Vice-Mayor Jay Jay Jimenez, in the name of his town, has requested that the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) consider including Atenas, where he has been treated to love as his own, in the Asiaone Celebrations to share the moments with us.

Jimmy Jr. said he vividly relives his own private interview with Jimenez after the Asian Championship during the awards night. The timing was perfect. While Jimmy was delivering his speech, the sheriff from the Makati Regional Trial Court and two others tried to make a grand entry through the northern Commercial south gate to serve the papers the garnishment papers filed by suitor Eric Aquino.

The party supposedly serves gin anywhere near this season's MVP that night, possibly because they didn't have tickets to show. The papers were eventually served later.

* * *

A colleague asked me to announce on a text message sent by Mark Joseph, then president and POC deputy secretary general, to the media recently.

How gross. "Dear media friends: Please please please be careful how you report our FEU athletes' performances. You succeed or destroy them and a generation of young athletes by using the wrong words. These are teenagers. I'm personally making this friendly appeal to you as responsible, ethical journalists. This is just the first YOG. We still have Asian Youth Games. Your coverage will affect public, sponsors and government attitude and support in the future. Children who may just be learning a sport now, and could one day be a winner, if only his/her perseverance and those supporting him/her are not scarped... The old style of cutting about elite events is just that. Old."

* * *

My colleague said he never thought he would live to see such an ethical request.

"That reels. Mark Joseph... is spreading his media understanding, asking all sports media to spare the Filipino athletes. In his papers their criticisms as he predicts an impending debacle of the RP team in the YOG. The media has always showed its sympathy for athletes because they already try their best, but not for sports heads who are responsible for all the embarrassment we at times face in major international competitions like the Southeast Asian Games, and now the YOG."

My colleague said the YOG should make Filipinos realize how far behind we are in the international arena.

"It's not the fault of those we are sending. The persons responsible for their failure are the sports leaders running their associations' sports programs. The taekwondo, basketball and weightlifting programs are in place, but for swimming, let's see from the YOG.

"The media's responsibility is to report the facts, not persons overseers for a poor performance, to please sponsors, government and the one paying public. As Mark Joseph prompting the bachelors write first!" said the scribe.

My statement? I second the motion.

* * *

Our condolences to the family of Guillermo "Boy" Alarilla, who passed away last Friday, Aug. 13, Manila time in New Jersey where he has been based for the past several years.

Boy is survived by wife Caridad (Baby) and sons Gino, a former Ateneo Blue Eagle, George and Gary.

Boy has been battling stage 4 lung cancer for the past nine years. Ironically, he was not a smoker.

RP five whips Iran, forges semis clash with Lebanon

SMART ARAL Filipinas ripped to the fourth period while Asian champion Iran still dominated 84-chin, pulling off a 79-67 win to reach the semifinals of the Fiba Asia Stanković Cup in Bohol.

JV Cuiso fired 12 of his 14 points and skipper Chris The nine of his 12 in the last quarter as the RP-Net finally put one over the bounces after four games since Ulas was banned last 2008.

Without its key players, Iran crumbled down the stretch, committing seven rumovers that allowed Ulas to forge a semifinal clash against host Lebanon, a 74-59 winner over the Filipinos in the tournament opener last week.

"We did nothing special," said Smart Ulas coach Rajko Toroman. "We just were, we did, together as a team and made our shots."

Ulas Bernard topped the Filipinos with 18 points and Maestro Lacandazo added 14, including three triples, but it was the dutch plays of former collegiate rivals Cuiso and Eric La Salle) and Yeo Antonio) that proved decisive in the end.

Protecting a 31-49 edge, Smart Ulas scored eight straight points capped by Cuiso's long jumper that opened a 12-point lead.

Asghar Kashiyan, who was found to deliver the goods in the absence of Iran's reliable gunmen, kept it close with a powerful drive and a three-point play for the Philippines sealed its semifinal trip with a 8-0 windup.

The Lebanese underscored their label as favorite by crushing Kazakhstan, 105-57, in another quarterfinal clash.

TSU

"Lebanon is really good. We have to stop their fastbreak and change our defensive strategy," said Toroman.

Iran missed high-scoring forward Samaad Mikhtabi Bahrami and playmaker Mahdi Kamrani, who are sitting themselves for the Fiba World Championship in Turkey at the end of the month.

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HALFT Kuchar hits from the 16th tee at Whistling Straits.

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

US PGA

Kuchar wrests lead

KOHLER, WISCONSIN—American Matt Kuchar made the most of an unruly break in the inclement weather to grab the clubhouse lead in the second round of the US PGA Championship on Friday.

Kuchar added a 67 to his opening round of 67 to comb the halfway stage at eight under par and leading by one shot from his countrymates Nick Watney, who carded a 68, with a group of seven players, including Britain's Ryder Cup hero and South Korean teenager Noh Seung-yul, a further shot back at five under.

Exactly half of the 156-player field, including world number one Tiger Woods, failed to finish their second rounds after spending most of the day cooling their heels following another delayed start at the Whistling Straits course that hugs the coastline of Lake Michigan.

Almost six hours were lost on the first two days because of the thick blanket of fog each evening, leaving organizers scrambling to get the last major of the year back on schedule.

Kuchar was among the 78 players who had to complete their opening rounds early on Friday morning but then got the benefit of going straight back out to play their second rounds before the wind picked up late in the afternoon.

Britain's Simon Khan briefly joined Kuchar at eight under but bogeyed the last three holes to slip back to a tie for third and leave Watney as Kuchar's closest challenger.

South Africa's Ernie Els also had trouble at the end of his round, finishing with a double bogey to end on two under.

US Masters champion Phil Mickelson had an up and down day struggling to find the fairway but holed some long putts for a 69 to join Els at two under.

Woods, who shot 71 on the opening day, made a solid start to his second round, scrambling to par his first six holes to remain at one under when play was suspended because of fading light.

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Woods, who shot 71 on the opening day, made a solid start to his second round, scrambling to par his first six holes to remain at one under when play was suspended because of fading light.

"It was tough out there, blowing pretty good, had to be very patient," Woods said. "I had to hang in there and did a good job with that."

American Jason Dufner shot a superb 66, the lowest completed round of the championship, to join Bryce Molder (67), Dustin Johnson (68), Jack Johnson (70), Stirling Khan and Stricker on four under.

Mellroy had an adventurous day, playing one brilliant recovery shot from the water's edge, and holding his nerve in the tricky conditions to put himself in contention to challenge for his first major title.

Mellroy was joined by Noh, who finished three of his five outstanding holes for a first round 68 then added 71 in the afternoon.

South African British Open champion Louis Oosthuizen rounded a 75 to finish at two-over one better than Britain's US Open winner Graeme McDowell, who rebounded from his first round 76 with a 71.

Reuter

THE 1992 US Olympic "Dream Team" after being inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame Aug. 13. Front row, from left: John Stockton, Clyde Drexler, Chris Mullin, (middle row, from left) Scottie Pippen, Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Charles Barkley, Karl Malone, (back row, from left) Larry Bird, Patrick Ewing, David Robinson and Christian Laettner.

Dream Team enters Hall of Fame

SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS—Scottie Pippen and Karl Malone were inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame on Friday recognized as individuals and as part of the Dream Team.

Pippen opened his acceptance speech by praising Michael Jordan, his fellow six-time NBA champion from the Chicago Bulls for being "the best teammate."

"MJ, you have touched so many people's lives, but none quite like mine," Pippen said.

A little-known player when the Bulls got him in 1987, Pippen won the first player inducted during the ceremony at Symphony Hall. With Jordan standing nearby on stage as his presenter, Pippen said he would "liberals (for) relationship forever."

Malone struggled with his emotions throughout his speech, especially at the end when he recalled his mother, saying she had died seven years ago Friday.

Malone also thanked late Utah Jazz owner Larry Miller for believing in him. Malone is a two-time MVP and second on the league's career scoring list, and said his success came from staying true to his Louisiana roots.

The 2010 class also included the Dream Team that won the 1992 Olympics, and the 1968 US gold medalists. Pippen and Malone played with Jordan, Magic Johnson and Larry Bird on the 1992 team, and Bird was wearing wraparound because of a bad back and had to be persuaded by Johnson to play.

He was joined on the stage by the senior Dream Team, all the living members of the 1968 team also assembled for festivities.

Federer, Nadal barge into Roger Cup semis

TORONTO—Roger Federer advanced to the Rogers Cup semifinals with a 6-3, 3-7, 7-6 (3) victory over Tomas Berdych on Friday night, avenging two defeats this season by the Czech player.

Federer's most recent loss to Berdych was in the Wimbledon quarterfinals in June, his latest competitive match before coming to Toronto.

"It's good to stop him and it's good for my confidence," Federer said. "I need to take out a few things from Wimbledon, but out there (on the court) I was thinking of the Wimbledon match. It played out. Similar enough (for him) to Centre Court."

Top-ranked Rafael Nadal had a 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 win over Philipp Kohlschreiber to move into a semifinal match against defending champion Andy Murray, who beat David Nalbandian 6-2, 6-2.

Federer broke serve in the first set to take a 4-2 lead and then dominated the next game with four straight points to push his advantage.

Down 4-3 on serve in the second, Federer committed a rare double fault and was outdueled at net, leading Berdych to the pivotal break point where he nearly overstrike.

Special Olympics Phils. joins nat'l tenpin games

ZULUETA

SEVEN CHAPTERS of Special Olympics Philippines will send 80 athletes to the National Games for tenpin bowling on Aug. 23-24 at the Commodore Star Mall Bowling Center in Mandaluyong City.

The participating chapters are Bataan, Baguio, Calabarzon, Iloilo, Mati-Davao, NCR-North and NCR South, according to Lowjet Isagani Cabuco, chair of the organizing committee tasked to supervise the games.

Special Olympics Philippines is headed by Maria Teresa Hinunangan as president and Alex Eala as national sports director.

According to Cabuco, the games will be highlighted by a mini-bowl games tournament. The three-game event will feature the athletes teaming up with able-bodied participants from sponsors Shakey and Coca-Cola and will be used to determine the classifications of the players.

Payoy Sports is co-sponsoring the event.

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Sunday BIZ

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Simple lang. Maasahan.

DECO'S branch at Alphaland

Union of batchoy and inasal creates a business boom

By Carrie Salomon-Manlosa

WHILE MANY restaurants in the metropolis serve batchoy as part of their regular fare, people at Deco's Original Batchoy insist that what others offer are not the same as Deco's.

"Not all batchoys are created equal," they claim, adding that the one served at Deco's is different and better.

Deco's "translated" batchoy, they say, and as such, it offers much more than a delicious bowl of clear soup with noodles and all those toppings. With every bowl of batchoy served at Deco's comes a glimpse of history of this Iloilo specialty and more.

The batchoy we know today has come a long way and has undergone various modifications from the batchoy that a young barber named Federico Guillergan Sr., or Deco, started in 1938 in a corridore at the La Paz public market in Iloilo City.

Beginnings

It started as a simple soup made of meat stock garnished with local herbs and spices. It was an instant hit. People stopped to Deco's corridore for the soup. Later, it attracted the huge Chinese population of the city, who joined the flock that patronized Deco's makeshift eatery in the public market. To cater to the Chinese market, noodles were added.

This offering had no name, so when Deco was asked about how the bowl

EDGAR Sia (left) and Federico Guillergan

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Globe Business

Lessons from the life of a trustworthy coach

ON JUNE 4th, the nation mourned the death of legendary UCLA Bruins coach John Wooden, a man revered as much for his off-court character as his on-court genius.

On the year, Wooden's exploits were unmatched. He very nearly captured seven straight titles, won 88 consecutive games, and had a perfect 38-0 record in championship contests. Overall, Wooden compiled a 664-162 record, winning per centage of over 80 percent.

Away from the spotlight, coach Wooden earned the admiration and devotion of his players because he was transparently trustworthy. He was a principled man and could be counted upon in live and in his values. As sportswriter Myron Cope observed, Wooden displayed rare and refreshing fidelity. "The man is straight, dependable, faithful, to his God, to his principles, to his family and his friends, to the crowd in his pocket, the person to his desk and the shyster on his bed," John Wooden lived authentically, and his commitment to his ideals left behind a legacy of greatness.

Trustworthy to Live His Best Effort

Himself an All-American at Purdue University, John Wooden could be depended upon to give his best effort on the court. He was a fierce competitor and inspiring team captain. His hard-nosed style earned him the nickname "the Rubber Man," because he was constantly diving on the floor after loose balls and then quickly bounding to his feet to continue play.

Trustworthy in Letters to His Conscience

Despite growing up in a part of the Hoosier state where the Ku Klux Klan maintained an active presence, John Wooden demonstrated a progressive attitude toward race. While coaching at Indiana State, coach Wooden boycotted the 1946 NAIA tournament because it refused to allow black players to participate. The following season, he drilled racial norms by playing an African-American on his team.

Trustworthy to Honor His Commitments

Once, university schools were preparing to hire Wooden as their head coach. His predecessor was to go to University of Minnesota. After several discussions, officials from Minnesota set a deadline of 6 p.m. to let John Wooden know whether or not he would forfeit the job. Six o'clock came and went with no phone call from Minnesota, so Wooden accepted a position at UCLA. Later in the evening, a call finally did come through from Minnesota. Apparently a blizzard had made travel difficult and prevented them from phoning earlier in the day. Although Wooden coveted the Minnesota job, he turned it down. He had already given his word to UCLA, and he refused to renege on his commitments.

Trustworthy to Enforce His Standards

Coaching during the '60s and '70s, the bespectacled John Wooden appeared on a three-hank to an earlier era at a time when self-expression and personal freedoms were flourishing. Wooden fashionably taught his players the proper way to wear their socks and required them to be clean-shaven. In 1972 star player Bill Walton, sporting flowing red hair and a beard, arrived at the team picture and asserted his right to keep his facial look. After witnessing patiently to Walton's expressed position, Wooden calmly replied, "Bill, I appreciate that. And we'll miss you." Minutes later Walton returned for the picture with a freshly shaven face.

Trustworthy Words from a Trustworthy Man

When John Wooden finished elementary school, his father, Joshua, passed along a few words of advice to him. John Wooden took the sayings to heart and made them his lifelong philosophy. Perhaps no one would be wise to heed them as well.

Be true to yourself.

Make each day your masterpiece.

Help others.

Drink deeply from good books, especially the Bible.

Make friendship a fine art.

Build a shelter against a rainy day.

Pray for guidance.

Count and give thanks for your blessings every day.

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DAMDAMIAN TURNS OVER PRESIDENCY TO PAGKARIAN. The Philippine Insurers Club inducted its new Board of Directors on July 21, 2016 at Pigalos Ballroom, Manila Peninsula. From left to right: Ruben C. Gustilo-past president, John Paulo D. Enriquez-director, Doris Mendez-director, Raul Budlaskar-director, Lawyer April R.B. Morales-secretary, Leticia G. Pagkarian-president, Vida Chiong-deputy commissioner/Insurance Commission, Eleanor J. Tesoro-vice president, Arnulfo R. Madrinan-treasurer and Armando C. Balmori-director.

RP book industry remains resilient

DESPITE CONSISTENT threats to its growth, the Philippine book publishing industry continues to grow in solid numbers.

Estimated to be worth at least P16.4 billion, the book publishing industry contributed 0.12 percent to the country's gross domestic product in 2009.

The National Book Development Board (NBDB) last year recorded a 37 percent increase in the number of new publishers, distributors, printers, compared with its 2006 figures. To date, there are 221 publishers, 116 wholesale and retail book sellers, 188 book importers, 69 book printers, and 15 book exporters.

"The Philippine book market is one of Asia's most resilient. With a more competitive mind-set, industry players initiated moves that all the more spurred its growth," says Irene Llorens, president, Philippine Asia, organizer of the Manila International Book Fair (MIBF) which has been running for the past 31 years. The annual event, which will be resumed at the SMX Mall of Asia on Sept. 21-18, hopes to attract at least 60,000 visitors this year.

The growth is attributed to the industry's supportive policies, programs and projects on book development, improved incentives, women promotions and market development services.

"Many companies, even non-publishers, have taken improved readership as their corporate social responsibility (CSR) causes and this has benefited the publishing industry. Innovative market promotion to increase readership is also crucial. The aim is not only to reward making books more attractive but accessible," adds Llorens.

Boost

The local publishing industry continues to show muscle with support from government and stakeholders.

Xinhua, the Department of Finance (DoF) had recalled DO 37-09 or "Guidelines on Duty-Free Importation of Books" that would have imposed duties on imported books. The move saved local book importers P115 million.

Piracy has also dogged the fledgling industry to 3000 cities,

Islanders see renewable energy as solution to daily brownouts

By Fernan Banan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SAN MIGUEL, CAMARINES SUR—The daily brownouts, especially those that occur in the middle of work or in the sleep of the night, have left residents of islands and local businessmen (but only about eaters could be heard).

This month, they are hopeful relief is coming as two new privately-owned hydropower plants begin delivering on the promise of reliable and cheap renewable energy.

The multimillion-peso power generation facilities of the Isarog Water and Electric Co. Inc. (Isarco) will be switched on this month in the towns of San Miguel and Caramoan.

An affiliate of the Isarcon Group of Companies chaired by Ricardo Isarcon-an, Elizalde S. Co, Isarco intends to supply half of the island's energy requirement of 6.5 megawatts (MW).

The company's P314 million hydropower plant in Barangay Sabang in San Miguel has a rated capacity of 2.7 MW while its P213 million plant in Barangay Hitoma in Caramoan has a rated capacity of 1.5 MW.

Isarco spokesman Timoteo Tandoc Sonora president, said these facilities will help alleviate the decade-long power problem in Camarines.

According to engineer Edwin Bael, district head of the Camarines Grid of the National Power Corp.'s Small Power Utilities Group, the maximum system demand last July was 7 MW during peak hours, with an off-peak demand of 5 MW.

Camarinenses, with its 233,000 inhabitants, has a power demand that grows 10 percent annually.

Its local power cooperative, the First Camarinenses Electric Cooperative Inc., has 33,000 member-consumers.

Power supply

Presently, Bael says, the grid's generating system consists of two diesel power plants in Iriga and Naga, the Bulabog-Putung-Bayabas plant, three Barge 115, base mobile gensets owned from Mosenk and a 2.6-MW hydro-fuel diesel operated by the private company Camarinenses Power Generation Inc.

However, of the total rated capacity of nearly 20 MW, only half is being generated due to frequent shutdowns of the old diesel gensets.

The three-decade-old Bulabog hydropower plant, on the other hand, produces only 1 MW out of its rated capacity of 1.8 MW due to low water intake at the forebay as a result of the prolonged 10 Niño phenomenon.

Last summer, it was operated for only three hours a day as it experienced the lowest water level since it was built by a Chinese company in 1978 during the Marcos regime.

Bael says that at present, 70 percent of the total power generation of the grid is produced by fuel-fed power plants, with Bulabog accounting for the remaining 30 percent.

With the commissioning of its two hydropower plants, Isarco will seek to overturn this ratio into 60:40 in favor of hydroelectric power.

Learning affected

Agnes Dobleo, principal of the Hitoma Elementary School in San Miguel town, says the power outages affect the learning environment of the students.

She says whenever brownouts occur, teachers and students would grope in the dark but they could not cancel classes as the students would be left behind.

"For the past two years, we didn't have electricity during our graduation rites. Our students marched without music. We called our names of the graduates without a sound system," Dobleo tells the media who were covering Isarcon's distribution of bags and educational supplies last July 22.

There was also a brownout that same day.

On the other hand, Ilce May, or Mary Ann Nova says the hydropower facilities would be a key to development in the fifth-class municipality.

"We are thankful because the Isarcon power plant will not only provide a stable supply of electricity, it could also bring investors to our town. Soon, when power is stable, more investments will come. We will no longer be a sleepy town," Nova says.

Mitigating climate change

Natividad says that since the hydropower plants produce renewable energy, it will help save the environment and mitigate the impact of climate change.

Bael agrees, as the power to be generated by the company's hydropower plants would help reduce the national government's fuel subsidy of P70 million a year for the Camarinenses grid's rental of the four Mosenk mobile gensets.

The government has called for individual power producers or private investors to venture into renewable energy projects in the islands of Polillo, Catanduanes and Camarines.

In 2012, another hydropower plant with a rated capacity of 2.4 megawatts will be opened in the villages of Pregreso and Poblacion in San Miguel, Catanduanes.

The commissioning of the Isarcon property would likewise allow NPC to decommission its rental genset by the end of the year and its diesel power plants in the near two years.

FNRI chief: Corporations can help solve RP malnutrition by creating shared value

CORPORATIONS CAN help solve malnutrition in the Philippines. This was the message of Mario Capanzana, head of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, an office under the Department of Science and Technology's.

Capanzana was one of the speakers during De Guzman Shared Value Forum held recently at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati. Representatives of business, government, academe, nongovernmental organizations and other sectors in attendance handled the event.

Capanzana tells the audience that food companies, NGOs, and agencies and other sectors of society should invest resources in developing and promoting nutritious, safe and affordable food products for the public, especially for the poorest of the poor. He points out that while the government is doing its part, it cannot do everything necessary to solve the problem of malnutrition.

The nutrition problem

Capanzana notes that there is an estimated 3.26 million Filipinos children suffering from malnourishment. In order to address this, he suggested a three-fold solution:

1) aim to produce approximately P15 metric tons per day of complementary food made from protein-rich ingredients;

2) invest in an adequate amount of manpower, machine, and materials to produce these food products;

3) establish strategically located centers where the food products are distributed, prioritizing the areas that need them the most.

Capanzana also points out that the diet of many Filipinos is deficient in essential nutrients such as energy, vitamin A, iron, and iodine-a deficiency usually caused by either a lack of knowledge of basic nutrition and/or poverty.

This is why Capanzana suggests that food companies include fortification in making their food products. Fortification is the adding of one or more nutrients, vitamins and minerals into food products. This allows the consumers of these products to get nutrients that they would otherwise lack.

Capanzana also advises that FNRI does its own research into developing fortified food products and is more than willing to share this research and the actual products with food companies.

"Sharing best practices with business partners is a paramount way for companies and the government to succeed in increasing economic opportunity and improving the health and nutrition of the public," Capanzana says.

CSV approach to malnutrition

The CSV forum's main speaker, Harvard professor and social responsibility expert Mark Kramer, defines Creating Shared Value in this way: "Shared Value (is the creation of) business policies and practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates."

Capanzana says that private sector and food companies should work together to achieve shared value with communities. governments identify areas where nutritional needs are most urgent, while both government and companies can collaborate to produce affordable foods and ensure their distribution, availability and accessibility. In this way, communities reap benefits of good health and proper nutrition, while corporations gain profits and competitive advantage.

"The government plays a crucial role in this relationship because businesses and society by creating and implementing laws and guidelines that would complement good nutritional practices," Capanzana says.

Food company's example

Capanzana acknowledges that Nestlé has been at the forefront in the promotion of good nutritional practices in the country through its various CSV efforts, primarily through the development of food products that are nutritionally beneficial to the public.

Harvard expert Kramer also lauds the CSV program of Nestlé related to milkfish in his presentation. "Nestlé is gaining competitive advantage by increasing nutrition and decreasing unhealthy ingredients in thousands of food products each year—aiming for 40 percent reductions in fat, salt and sugar while maintaining taste preferences over competing items by at least 60 percent of customers. [Nestlé has] specialized nutritional products for different ages and different ages and with different incomes," says Kramer.

Nestlé Philippines' SVP and Corporate Affairs Head Edith de Leon also points out that even before the term CSV was conceptualized, Nestlé has been Creating Shared Value for the time the company was founded about 140 years ago.

Nestlé Philippines with the Asian Development Bank, the Philippine Business for Social Progress and the Asian Institute of Management (PBSP, Center for Social Responsibility co-sponsored the CSV forum to encourage more companies to embrace the CSV philosophy and become agents of social progress.

George Optical opens first branch in Cebu

GEORGE OPTICAL brings the same superior quality service it offers in its Manila stores to Cebu. After establishing 11 branches in Manila, it launched its first Cebu branch at SM City Cebu North Reclamation Area in Cebu City, welcoming Cebuanos by way of special discounts.

George Optical offers the latest instruments and technology that provide optimum satisfaction with every visit. Its friendly, customized eye care services and friendly staff are sure to delight the warm and friendly people of Cebu who deserve no less than first-class eye care.

The expansion has always been part of the company's plan. One of George Optical's primary goals is to reach and serve as many Filipinos as it possibly can.

"Opening a presence in Cebu is a perfect opportunity to do just that," says marketing manager Edna Jacinto. "With another province opening, we are closer to reaching our vision of having more and more people see life perfectly."

The opening of the Cebu branch also coincides with George Optical's celebration of its 30th anniversary in the eye care industry. The company has been at the forefront of eye care service.

Several award-giving bodies have recognized George Optical's services. Among these are the 2007 Integrated Philippine Association of Optometrists Hiasé Outstanding Optical Retailer of the Philippines, the 2008 People's Choice Award, and the 2009 Consumers Quality Award.

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MANUNURI AND FINALISTS, INC.

After conquering the export market, firm now eyes local scene

Front page B4

moving sales out of the factory, scads of people putting batch-to-minutes, there are those who are making production, and others going to the nearby provinces to buy scraps of goods and raw which we will give to our workers."

They were the very first ones who moved to action and recovered quite easily, claims Feliciano.

"We were back to 60 percent capacity in 30 days and 100 percent capacity in 90 days," boasts Feliciano. "You can see our line-number of turning a crisis into opportunity. Everybody is helping out. It's beautiful... It really proves us ang bawtas dito: and in unison with the dimension where you want to go, huddle or huddling mahabagan."

Recession

On the other hand, the global recession also affected them as orders from abroad slightly decreased but, again, Feliciano says: "It became an opportunity for us to look into the local market."

"Before, we're saying at the start that the way to grow is the export market, but now the way to recovering the volume lost in the export would be via the local market," explains Feliciano, who was awarded Outstanding CEM in Entrepreneurship in 2001 and Most Outstanding Kapampangan in Business with GMA Entrepreneur in the Province of Pampanga in 1992.

And with the onset of promising new designs and fully furnished showrooms

Kitak bedroom, bench and nightstands

also in the country, Feliciano is optimistic that they can meet the needs of those specific local buyers and savvies that their pricing can tailor fit to that of the consumers' budget.

Throughout its 34 years in the furniture business, Calfurn has developed communities and formed many people not only in Pampanga but in Manila, Laguna and provinces, and from its initial 30 workers, the company's workforce is now more than a thousand.

They also train and employ out-of-school youths, on the condition that they will finish their studies, to make bamboo and other accessories.

Asked what makes Calfurn a hit in the global market, Feliciano declares: "Design-wise ours is really world class. Filipinos are very skillful. Our products are hand crafted and you could see in the unique designs in the country. Feliciano is optimistic that they can meet the needs of those specific local buyers and savvies that their pricing can tailor fit to that of the consumers' budget.

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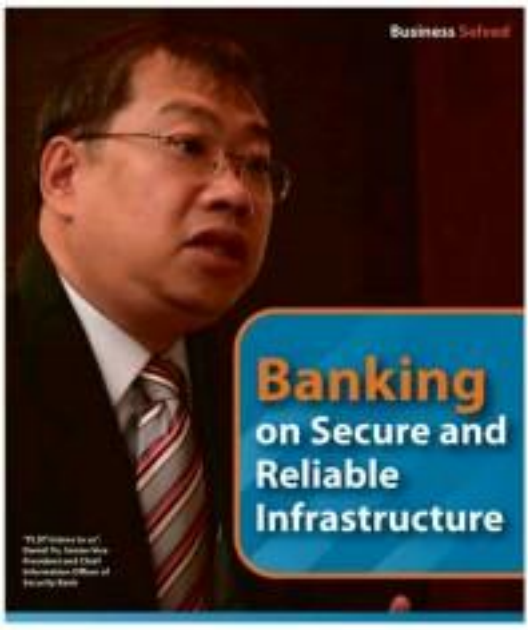
Indeed, Calfurn has been consistently making waves worldwide, and sending out one step from from showing in the world the best of Filipino craftsmanship, Feliciano has this one dream. "I would like a good portion of my investment to have a piece of furniture of Calfurn. I want them to enjoy the comfort of a chair, the beauty of it is workmanship and the attention to the workers [who made it], that every time they would be sitting on a chair they will remember Calfurn who did the product.

Around the world, ang dami ng tatapak sa ganyang market. It's about time we measure human ang [illegible]



Banking on Secure and Reliable Infrastructure

"PLDT makes it so sir," shared Ric Santos-Ang, Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer of Security Bank

Security Bank trusts PLDT IP VPN to link up its 125 branches nationwide

Daniel Yu, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer of Information Technology and Channels Network Group of Security Bank, is a unique individual of rare talents. He is an IT instinct and marketing savvy.

At the contract signing between PLDT and Security Bank held recently at the swanky Late Dad's Bistro's penthouse restaurant, Mr. Yu expressed appreciation for the bugs and bounds made in PLDT network technology. PLDT in turn has its own sophisticated duality, coupling reliable infrastructure with a quality team of professional relationship managers. "PLDT IP VPN service is reliable, secure, and flexible," he says. "PLDT listens to us."

Mr. Yu delights in the rare combination of the right technology and the right partner to make great things happen. "It's the people behind the technology that really make things happen... PLDT knows our needs."

Sharing a history of innovation

Security Bank is an inspiring post-war success story. From tiny first branch in Escolta, it became a major player among Filipino Chinese families, and became one of the country's most viable and most managed universal banks. Customers value its distinctive service, characterized by a combination of professional competence and customer service excellence.

True to its tradition of innovation, Security Bank introduced first-to-market products and services in recent years. This includes the much-awarded Security Digibanker cash management solutions which introduced to the market the PNSI e-Payment facility, the first ever e-payment system that can process the payment of customs duties and taxes and also promptly transmit reports of collection directly to the Bureau of Customs.

Early this year, the first mobile auto debit collection facility, Auto Debit Collection Manager Plus (ADCM Plus), was launched for e-telecoms client which affords their distributors with a fully-integrated e-commerce facility for online transactions to purchase, order, load up and even make cash transfers to their streamline customers, sub-dealers and resellers.

Security Bank also introduced the first vertical cash card and debit card with its Customer ATM card for cashless shopping, bills payment, travel and dining and the Cash Card Reader/Card debit card for use both locally and internationally. These are just among the many product innovations introduced by the bank to meet the varied and ever-changing needs of its clients.

Today, Security Bank is focusing on the consumer market offering a wide range of products combined with the highest level of customer service delivered consistently throughout its expansive nationwide network of branches. The PLDT IP VPN interconnection provides the technological support that enables the branches to serve its customers with better efficiency.

The Bank known for its tagline "Security You Can Bank On" certainly lives up to this commitment with this partnership with PLDT by providing a reliable and secure communications network for all its branches.

"Making the UMAD! choice"

Over the next few years and with its solid corporate banking reputation, Security Bank will take on the growing consumer segment. The bank even offers car, personal and emergency loans—effectively expanding consumer choice.

Through UMAD!, the Security Bank's banker allows individual customers to perform basic transactions such as balance inquiry, funds transfer, or bill payment from their mobile phones, at their own convenience.

A Treasured Partnership

Reaching out to a wider base is part of the innovative thrust of Security Bank, a natural alliance with PLDT's own innovation-driven culture. Today, Daniel is sure that alliance in delivering even more changes in both operations. "PLDT IP VPN gives us the capability and flexibility to roll out new applications and technologies in our banking operations more effectively."

PLDT infrastructure actively links Security Bank's head office with its different branches. "I think it is a highway, and you need a good highway to transport all this data and information." On the people behind the service, Daniel says, "The PLDT Relationship Managers are very responsive to our needs. We treasure our relationship with them in the same way that we treasure our relationship with our clients."

Ricardo Escalada, Corporate Relationship Business Head of PLDT Business shared his appreciation for the strong partnership between the two corporate entities. "We thank you very much. PLDT and Security Bank have been partners for more than a decade. We appreciate this opportunity to be part of your business, and I am confident that we will grow together in this partnership."

PLDT and Security Bank partners in innovation

PLDT Relationship Manager Rosie Ocampo, Security Bank Business Management Head Ricardo Escalada, Corporate Relationship Business Head Ricardo Borgonia and the deal with Security Bank Senior VP Ramon Yu (3rd) and Joint VP Anthony Arit and Technical Support Head Raymund D. Dee.

Sunday BIZ

CALFURN'S Philden chair and ottoman is a hit in foreign buyers.

After conquering export market, firm now eyes local scene

By Sharon Rebus Pharaon

NEITHER FIRE nor volcanic eruption nor global recession can stop Calfurn, an Angeles City-based furniture manufacturer, from making a name in the international home furnishings scene.

From its humble beginnings in 1976, with 7 incorporators, 20 workers, and a capital of P30,500, Calfurn has since grown big and has gained upscale clients mainly in the United States as well as in Asia, Europe and Australia.

Initially, Calfurn catered to local buyers, particularly to servicemen assigned in the US Military Bases in Clark and Subic. It then ventured into the export market in the early '80s and has been exporting since.

Present clients include Williams Sonoma Group (Williams Sonoma Home, Pottery Barn and West Elm), Crate and Barrel, Restoration Hardware, McKenzie, Palecek, Dillard's and Ralph Lauren, while former customers include Neiman Marcus, Macy's, Bloomingdales, Linen and Things, Bed, Bath and Beyond, Nordstrom, JC Penny and Bath & Body works to name a few.

Lately, Calfurn is re-conquering the local market with its world-class products that will satisfy the needs of local buyers.

CELINE Dion owns a set of Calfurn's creations.

Beginnings

Evelino F. Feliciano, chair of the board of Calfurn Manufacturing Philippines Inc., recalls that there was a big demand for rattan furniture when they started.

"With that kind of demand, the seven of us decided to put up this business. It's a made-to-order kind of thing and the demand was huge," Feliciano, who was only 23 years old when he joined Calfurn, explains.

He relates that their initial customers from the US Military Bases enjoyed Calfurn "because they can get very good pricing," citing the instance a furniture piece they sell for $100 that could cost around $400 to $500 back in the States.

Feliciano, a former jeepney driver and a CPA by profession, also states that the name Calfurn or California Furniture came about in reference to their early American patrons.

In fact, they even named the furniture pieces they made for the US Military bases after a fad. Heather who commissioned them to do the set. Thus, Hunter chair and Hunter table. However, this particular design, which Macy's department store picked up for a time, is no longer in the market today.

Materials

Majority of the raw materials are locally sourced. Aside from rattan, Calfurn also uses seagrass, sea grass, bamboo, rivers, abaca and other indigenous materials that proved to be a hit in the international market. Even the bark of abaca, which is normally discarded, is now being used in the many products of Calfurn.

Aside from the company's in-house designers, Angelo B. Salonga, Calfurn president and one of its founders, helps in creating Calfurn's innovative designs. Feliciano says that it's very important to introduce new designs to the market constantly.

But like any other declining business, Calfurn had its share of crises in the many years that it had been in the furniture trade, such as when the factory was twice hit by fire, the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo happened, a good amount of their facilities collapsed to the ground.

"But that didn't stop us from continuing the business and we even tried to help other people," Feliciano affirms, adding that "after three days we started putting back the factory."

True enough, Feliciano seems to the "bayanihan" spirit growing during the depressing episode: "We have sets of people re-

(TURN TO B2)

ANGELO B. Salonga and Evelino F. Feliciano

'Design-wise ours is really world-class. Filipinos are very skillful ... Iba talaga ang kamay ng Pinoy'

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Paris home designed by Pinay designer lands in Vogue Living /2

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

STEPHANIE Morrison, Dorothy in the Manila production of "Cats: Here and Forever," wears a Kate Torralba graphic print mini-inverted oversized bandeau. NOTES DAILY INQUIRER

'Cats' actors dress up in Rajo, Viktor Jeans, Joey Samson —and mine!

By Kate Torralba
Contributor

THE "CATS: Here and Forever" crew was anything but catty last Thursday afternoon as I enjoyed the privilege of playing dress up with them. I thought it was a perfect opportunity for the Aussies to try on Filipino designs.

It was quite a rep-sesing Rom Tom Tog-gee in Joey Samson and Viktor Jeans, and Deanne and Bembakukan in Rajo Laurel and my reactions! I was among the mesmerized audience at their gala night performance a few weeks ago, so it was both surreal and refreshing to get exclusive their offstage personas.

The big challenge was squeezing in a fashion shoot in a little over three hours—hair and makeup included. But our photographer Charles Ramosmajo wasn't worried. He said, "These theater actors should be easiest to shoot! They know how to project onstage, and so it shouldn't be different with a camera."

Charles was right, though the trio we shot admitted they were more comfortable being photographed as their "Cats" characters.

Hot picks

Mellisacat's John & Flora in the Dress, sexy Bass Tom Tigger onstage. He GRACE

SPOTTED: John D'Mars (from Team Tagger) in gangsta getup silk shirt by Joey Samson

SMASHING "Cats" trio in Prive designs (L-R) Monique Pitcher (Bombshell) in Raju Lazaro, Stephanie Harrison (Executive) in Kate Torralba, John D'Mars (Ram Tan Tagger) in Joey Samson

'Cats' actors dress up in Rajo, Viktor Jeans, Joey Samson—and mine!

From page A1

gamely tried on some pieces of Raju Lazaro, Joey Samson and last new jeans from White Jeans Greenbelt 5.

We haggled over a leather motorcycle jacket from Viktor ("Fun! Very '80s," he said), but he later opted for an internationally tailored Joey Samson blazer.

Monique Chanel Pitcher said her "eccentric" mother is in Manila for her fashionable second coming. The extravagant Pitcher aptly plays the no-nonsense Bombalurina, and, sans kitty makeup, she channels a young Linda Hamilton ("Hypnotize").

Getting her in a Rajo and ET, plus a thanatotic outfitter, we all agreed she has the Hollywood story-vibe down pat.

Petite Sydney native Stephanie Harrison toned on Kate's black silk penny with a Joey Samson bolero or while chatting about her "Cats" experience.

"I think it's such a unique show because we're singing and we're always dancing, and there's this extra layer of being feline," she said. Harrison debuted as Executive in the "Cats" Manila production.

Couture and magalilige

It was also a thrill to see the Jules Raquiza costume-up done. Napier is a multi-awarded set and costume designer from London. His "Cats" designs were later a Dramas Desk Award for Outstanding Costume Design.

I was amused by the interplay of textures that Napier used: lurex flats, stretchy lycras and pewters, and coy furriettes. Kitty in various patriotic tones (Manila Missus) on an organza, bulky scale).

I particularly loved the resonance of the rap-dancing Old Gumbie's costume: massive and bodyless like, it was done in a novelty knit.

RUM TUM Tugger is decidedly handsome offstage. Actor John D'Mars wears a Joey Samson wool jacket with black stretch cotton tee and black jeans with leather detail from Viktor Jeans.

Up close, the costumes that look like a palette of lavenia and blacks onstage actually have groovy interesting colorways. Bombalurina's wig and getup are a fiery orange, gray velvet and black.

The period trim is also shared with use as interesting backstage tidbits. They actually do their own makeup! Silver one lit for hidden chest. John, Stephanie and Monique exchanged backstage as their feline alter egos.

I got gonna lounge seeing Demi in character—their floral, animal movements and animated expressions bringing the Napier designs to life.

Last hurrah

By popular demand, Lunchbox Theatrical Productions, David Atkins Enterprises and Concertus, in association with The Really Useful Company Asia Pacific, have extended the Manila run of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Cats: Now and Forever" Aug. 31 to its final Philippine date before the production scampers to Taiwan.

Here, you can catch the show in other cities, but only in Manila will you enjoy the Cats ensemble's rendition of Dru Lacson's beautiful Filipino translation of "Memory." And, you can't afford to miss Lea Salonga's spine-tingling performance as Grizabella in COP's Tanghalang Huseng dinelarda.

For tickets, contact Ticketworld at (+632) 891-9999 or visit www.ticketworld.com.ph.

[illegible]

Coro Tomasino sings 'Reyna ng Palanyag' on 385th anniversary of enthronement

THE EXQUISITE singing of Coro Tomasino with the lush orchestral accompaniment by the UST symphony orchestra filled up the walls of the newly restored Cathedral of St. Andrew on Aug. 10 at 6 p.m. It was the feast day of the Lady of Buen Suceso, patroness of Parañaque (formerly Palanyag). Bishop Jesse Mercado, main celebrant of the concelebrated Mass with 30 priests, including Msgr. Manuel Gabriel, recalled how fishermen found the image in the caves that housed the statue of the Virgin Mary. A boy was asked to pick up from a jar filled with different colors of the Virgin.

Three times he picked up the name "Nuestra Señora de Buen Suceso," (our Lady of Good Events). Today, is the feast day of the Quezonians of Mary, to we honor Our Lady of Good Events by talking about her miraculous intercession. Prominent of her devotees are Dr. Irwin Cabahug, president of the Parish Pastoral Council; Pedro Evangelista, president of the Cofradia de Nuestra Señora de Buen Suceso; Ibid. Feliciano who sent me her photos; singers Cora and Sonia's Experiences, who sang the offertory song "Ama Ko" last

Prominent Cebuanos awarded Garbo sa Sugbo at Governor's Ball

IT WAS A HOLIDAY throughout the province of Cebu on Aug. 6, in observance of its 443rd anniversary. A royal decree from Spain's King Philip II on that day in 1565 created the province of Cebu, the first in the history of the Philippines.

"And it is the No. 1 province in the country," says third-termer Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia, the first woman to occupy the position. The date before and the day after were enabled with executive issuances practically all the municipalities and cities of the province.

One special event took place on Aug. 7 at 10 p.m. with the opening of the One Cebu Expo 2010 at the Cebu Administrative Convention Center in Mandaue City. Jovinson Benedicto, chair issue of the expo, was congratulated for a job well done.

Governor Garcia cut the ceremonial ribbon together with Mrs. President Ayanar Sitoy, Mandaue City Mayor Jonas Cortes, Senator Rong Revilla and Lucio Tan's grandson, Antonio Tan. Lady Rochelle Fernandez Marcos, now the Representative for Davao.

The One Cebu Expo is an annual event. This year, aside from the various Cebu sectors showcasing products, there was participation from the neighboring provinces, and a delegation from Nanking, China. It was led by Lin Jin Hao Tiang.

Melanie Ng and Belinda Ong were among those who bought magnificent necklaces from the fashion accessories outlet. They wore them later in the day at the Governor's Ball held in the provincial capitol's event hall. It was all-silver-with-white gladesh.

The hulk of the ball was undoubtedly Governor Garcia in a Regio creation by Cebu's top couturier, Philip Rodriguez. The ball has to save important significance, as it is the occasion for the governor to bestow special citizens and the Garbo sa Sugbo (Cebu's Pride) awards.

The program was hosted by Sam Concordia, and planned to the last intricate detail by Jorge Primero. It was brief, snappy and elegant.

Citations

Citations were given to the Cebu Normal University, represented by its president Marcelo Logan; Cebu Technological University, represented by Victor Bellaquita; and St. Benedict Childhood Education Center, represented by its founder Lydia Bustos and school head Ma. Socorro Cedilla.

St. Benedict earned its citation for being **declare the only one in the Philippines** the World Choir Games in China last July. The children and their conductor Dennis Ingard did so well they bagged two silver medals and an award in the different classifications. They were on hand to perform their winning songs to the delight of the governor's guests.

The Garbo sa Sugbo plaques were presented to the following, all of whom gave a brief thank you speech, some in Cebuano:

Businessman Ignacio John Gokongwei and Mrs. Isetta Quimsing Sy; Energy Sec. Rene Almendras, popular singer and Ati's diva Dulce, in real life Ma. Teresa Llamedo Oyanes; author and historian Abad Mojares; Dr. Ramon del Nieto from the University of San Carlos; and painter Alfredo PJM Mendoza.

The response from the nameless came by way of a short talk by Mrs. Sitoy. The lass was not head (as usual). A courageous Tesda dieter went to the mat at the sound system and told him to adjust it.

Order of Lapu-Lapu

Governor Garcia recently created the Order of Lapu-lapu, the highest that may be bestowed on any individual by the province of Cebu. The evenings highlight was its presentation to the first recipient, His Eminence Rene de Cardinal Vidal, Archbishop of Cebu.

Cardinal Vidal has been in Cebu for 29 years since he came in 1981 as auxiliary bishop with the right of succession to the then archbishop, His Eminence Julio Cardinal Rosales. On the death of the latter he succeeded, and in May 1983 was installed as Cardinal in Rome.

In his speech, Cardinal Vidal recalled how at first he was reluctant to accept the assignment, citing that he did not speak Cebuano and other nonsense. He told the Holy Father on a meeting in the Vatican.

Pope John Paul II entertained him with these words: "You are lucky you are being sent with in your own country. Look at me, from Poland to Rome." Cardinal Vidal then said he loved Cebu from the very start, and now even more. He has visited every parish, church and chapel within his see.

The program ended with an inspirational message from Governor Garcia whose opening line was, "40 years is not long enough in history." She is proud and happy to have kept Cebu's unity and thanked all Cebuanos for it, whether "you are as by birth, by choice, or in remembrance."

Dinner, serve-Chaffet style, was an opportune stop for guests to move about. When the presidential table broke up after desserts, it was Imelda Marcos who got the mob, for people wanting to be photographed with her. Even gracious, she greeted old and new friends. When the Firefighters played swingy tunes she was among the first on the Queen Bees.

Also trotting about ITABE, they say in Cebuano is the famous ones were Mabel and Augusto Dacillos; Inday with Roger Serra; Glenn Wapee Tobe and Christina Pinero, Garcia's Honorary Consul Ann Garcia, Jesse Bermejo and Roland Concepcion.

Cebu and Marilyn Yong were present, with their daughter Carla Yong and her fiance, Englishman Chris McMenamin. Marilyn's late just accepted Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama's invitation to head the city's Sugar Beautification Council. She has asked Marquerite Dwilher to assist her. Together they may turn Osmeña Boulevard into something like Champs Elysees.

Very much in evidence at the gathering were Governor Garcia's father, former Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia, now Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives; her uncle Tomas Garcia, her brother Rep. Pablo John Garcia, her cousin Iella Garcia Nera, with a camera to shoot photos at the unbidden, Sen. Miguel Zubiri, among them.

Mission's honorary consul Nathan Lederman had come from Manila, along with Angelo honorary consul Helen Ong and Zamboanga honorary consul Ma. Agnes Hofbottlen. Garnett Campbell was seated next to Jose Luis Yulo, honorary consul of Slovenia. He said that Slovenia is the only country in the world with Love in it. It's all in its orthography. Spelling, that is.

Everybody, Every Reason

cool & clean

Throughout the years, C2, the country's leading brand of ready-to-drink green tea, has helped pave the way for Pinoys to live cool and clean lifestyles. With its many delicious flavors, C2 has figured into the lives of countless Pinoys who have come to love its healthy and tasty goodness. And no doubt, everyday green tea drinkers all have their special C2 stories to tell – of how meeting the demands of everyday living gets a bit easier and how moments become all the more refreshing when it's with C2.

Showcasing the growing affinity many Pinoys have with the much-loved drink, C2 launches C2 Everybody, Every Reason, a new campaign that highlights real tales into the lives of real people who find inspiration from C2. From a high school student, a musician, a nurse, a physical trainer, a designer, to a call center agent, their stories mirror the lives of many C2 drinkers who face everyday challenges in the workplace, at home, or in school. Endearing and relevant, the campaign shows that it's easy to stay refreshed, positive, and thankful for the little things in life when C2's around.

Making refreshing music
Like many college students, Margo Adan knows how important it is to stay refreshed especially when coping with schoolwork. A music student in UP, Margo balances exams and papers with writing her own songs and performing for crowds. That's why she turns to C2 to keep herself energized as she daily challenges. And when it comes to making music, she takes inspiration from everyday experiences and takes comfort in a cool glass of refreshing C2 to keep her in tune with her dreams.

Through healing hands
C2 also offers a pure iron dose for Ariel Reid, a 27-year old nurse who faces critical challenges in the hospital. Finding fulfillment in easing the children in her care happy and well, she strives to stay healthy herself so she can help young patients recover. Ariel has always been a fan of C2, and she delights in its health-giving goodness and delicious taste. That's why she always keeps a bottle of C2 handy to sustain her energy and mood when she's taking care of the kids.

Clean and cool in high school
High school student John Pineda is quite the dynamo seen with a tee on his plate – from sports, schoolwork, to hanging out with friends. And for a busy student, he's on top of his game thanks to C2. With his favorite green tea drink in tow, hurdling the daily challenges in school gets a lot easier. And he even has time to play football with his friends!

Calling the shots
For call center agent Mel Sales, fulfilling work is crucial, and hectic workdays can be a huge challenge. With the stress and long hours that come with the job, Mel struggles to stay refreshed and focused to work. Mindful about her mind and body, she enjoys only healthy beverages like C2 that has health-giving antioxidants and delicious taste that give her an much needed right boost. With C2 by her side, she breezes through demanding night shifts in a sunny mood that somehow serves the phone wins.

Designing the C2 lifestyle
One of the country's top fashion designers Kate Tandoc is all about cuties. Always coming up with cutting-edge designs in trendy buzz, Kate craves perfection in many shades and flavors. That's why she loves about C2 Cool and Clean Green Tea, her drink of choice when she's in her design studio. C2 offers many colorful flavors that help keep her inspiration alive, her fashion persuasive fresh and her ideas ever flowing.

Fit and healthy with C2
Architect and fitness enthusiast Roland Ernesto Gonzalez knows that nutrition seriously. A hardcore health buff, he knows that for a healthy drink to be truly effective, it must taste great as well. He finds his perfect drink in C2, as he shares its healthy benefits and great-tasting flavors with his clients. For him, every day in the gym becomes more special and refreshing with C2 to keep the energy on a high.

Stories like these show how C2 is all about real people with real experiences. Filled with lots of other fun and heartwarming scenes, the campaign is set to reintroduce real-life and familiar Pinoy lifestyles that everyone can surely relate to. So make everyday moments more special and be inspired to create your own invigorating experiences only with C2 Cool and Clean Green Tea.

For more information about C2, please visit: **www.dec2life.com**

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LET'S PLAY

And now, a young man responds

ROOTS AND WINGS

Cielito Bathan-Gabuelo

Here's a memorable reaction—the letter of a man any girl would love to fall in love with someday

OVERWHELMED, awed and humbled.

These three words best describe the feelings my daughter and I have had last week as we received letters and comments on last week's column that contained her letter to the man she will love someday.

Apparently the letter struck a chord among the young and old.

One letter stood out—from an equally hopeful young man. I told my daughter the whole experience was starting to feel like a scene from "Letters to Juliet" and just eternally romantic 45-year-old heart just felt really blessed to live in the middle of it all.

I will let my daughter express our gratitude in her response below. We have been blessed in more ways than you will ever know. May you all find God's best in this time.

My daughter's letter

Dear readers,

I never expected that so many of you would feel yourselves to a simple letter I wrote one night when I was most vulnerable, when to request I realize now and just echoes of the little dreams my heart carried.

While I really to become a doctor someday, I know my focus should be on the finest intricacies of the human heart as opposed to what it feels. However, I find nothing wrong with helping us more than somewhat make it skip a beat.

It hope for love isn't a bad thing, as long as you continue to live your life to the full while waiting for God's best. As one wise reader wrote—it could be that "God is still preparing you both for that right moment."

Meanwhile, we can learn, experience, and become happy with the things we do have in our lives today before that time comes, because after all, happiness never does depend on a single person.

Thank you to everyone who shared their stories of waiting and finding true love and to all the young people who appreciate the concept of not settling for just anyone but waiting for that someone. It is nice to know that there are others out there who still hope and pray for a right kind of love.

Two nights after the letter was published, I received this in my personal mail—an anonymous response to my letter. I want to share it with you all—a letter written by a man any girl would love to fall in love with someday.

Dear Ira,

I will admit that it came as a surprise to me when you decided to write a letter such as this. I always thought you were the type to keep things to yourself—one of the many things that keep us apart no matter.

There is a part of every boy's heart that dreams of his princess. However, no matter what the age, this princess does not change.

Sometimes years into this life, and although your unwillingness to give your heart away is what troubles you, what troubles me is how willing I am each and every time to give my complete heart and yet there is no one to receive anything of me.

Try as I might to give my heart to someone I find imagined was pure, and I end up putting the pieces back together, mustering the courage to make it seem like everything is wrong and nothing has been lost, when in fact, everything in my life at that point feels colorless.

Although I have only known you for a few years, I am as confident as a man in love can be, that you are the perfect girl I have been thinking of ever since. Sometimes years into this life, and we are both still apparently waiting... for someone to be swept off her feet, and for someone to sweep you off yours. And yet, here we are closer to each other than you would expect.

I am sorry I took this long, but I hope you know, it has not been recently easy trying to whisk you off to my palace on horseback. I am not alone in this pursuit of your love and I have no palace to show you in comparison to the many other men who will try to win your heart. You have not been unduly expensive as well, but I do not blame you for this. In fact, it's just one of the many quirks that sets you apart from other girls out there.

You will be disappointed to learn that it has not been such a fairytale—meeting me, and for this I will be eternally sorry. I hope you learn guys spend more than enough time trying to come up with the perfect introduction, what with sweaty palms and a shaky voice. As to the extreme disappointment I may cause you, I also hope you know that you are still an adventure in my eyes always. I may not have begun it as a fairytale for us, but I will go through hops and hoops in order to you feel like the princess that you are.

Your eccentricities are what I love about you. Even during your occasional mood swings, it is the most endearing thing to see you drift years. Although I cannot admit, sometimes it can be quite confusing; keeping me on my toes, it just makes me want to be with you even more. I want to be the man you stand beside as your best and your worst—because either way, you are still you. Smooth-hell, and I would be nothing less than the luckiest guy in town if you were just as happy as I was, standing beside you.

You are and will always be my best friend, even if one day I end up finding us more dirty because you have borrowed them all. And when you return them I end up not wearing them, still, because the scent is there to remind me of you even when you are not around. You are my best friend because you look out for me, after a remodel dog, or after we lose a game of basketball. Even during times when you refuse to speak to anyone, me included...you are still my best friend.

You will be the girl I try on hand to cook for, and despite my best efforts I know I will fail, but I will love how you still try to taste my concoctions, even when the taste might make you gag. You will be the girl whom mom I will try so hard to impress, and then you will fix my collar in hopes that I am ready to meet your parents. Adventure after adventure, you will be the girl I will see the world with, complete with the local cuisine (make mental note).

You are the girl I will smile to even in the worst of times. Even when the day feels like ;_;, I know that when I see you that my world cannot be so bad if you are beside me. You are the girl whose smile I will make up to, even when some mornings might find me with a slight case of morning breath. I cannot wait to love you.

Fingers crossed and palms held together, I hope one day you will find me worthy of your heart. In the meantime, know that I am out here somewhere, waiting for you, hoping that you are too.

Loving you forever and a day

Me

I was completely overwhelmed by this and went to sleep that night with a smile on my face, knowing that there are many people out there who continue to hold steadfastly to the hope of finding not the perfect, but the right person for them. So to every heart out there that continues to hope in someday, I issue what dear Josh like Josie's is allowing God to write our love stories.

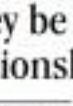
With much love and gratitude,

Ira

E-mail the author at cielitobathan@gmail.com

Should money be an issue in a relationship?

EMILY'S POST



Emily A. Marcos

DEAR EMILY,

I am a working professional already. I come from a well-to-do family and we are a happy, close-knit family. I have a boyfriend of more than eight years and most of it is via long distance. He is well-educated and intelligent. Though he comes from a poor family, his schoolmates flocked his educational and he is accepted by my family.

My one problem is his practice of handling money. Recently, I found out that the money I saved for our wedding was almost gone and withdrawn without my knowledge. I purposely saved it in a PNB passbook for safekeeping. Only upon it, I have. When I asked him about it, he told me his brother borrowed the money to pay for an application abroad. I was hurt because he did not tell me about it, and only discovered it after I confronted my fiancee's banking.

I really hate it when money is already involved. I don't know where I stand. I don't know whether I can trust him or not. I cannot even tell any of my friends or family because I want to protect him.

CONFLICTED WOMAN

Oh oh—that's a no no! Couldn't he have sent you a text message, or e-mail, or even called you immediately when his brother's money problems was happening? Did his brother even ask his consent, or did his mind just go rampant and disconnected your account—for bad access to—from you? And was it really his "brother" who needed the money? Can he show proof of said expenditure—just for your peace of mind? Has that you "disrespect" him of course?

Remember, you're not yet married to him and therefore under no obligation to cover his financial obligations at this stage. As Val Broyner exclaimed in the movie "The King and I," "It's a pseudonym!" How could you have entrusted him with your affairs and, knowing fully well his money issues. Would you put a lot to guard your children?

Life is in constant flux, and stuff that happen within seconds, minutes, or days could greatly affect a fragile psyche, long term.

So very many of people who cannot handle money that is not their own. It speaks volumes about their character. They may not even be able to spell "integrity."

Will you allow yourself to be associated with someone like that, more so a person who could become the father of your children? Think hard about the long distance relationship. Could the man you fell in love with, not have turned into a stranger who has acquired strange and questionable habits—after all those years of separation?

Still, money is either saved, begged, or borrowed. Other than that—it is missing!

E-mail the author at emilyamarcos@inquirer.com.ph; Subject: Lifestyle

IN THIS ISSUE
India's most remarkable chain of shops /E2

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

PROTECT YOUR DREAMS

Dreams of Giving Back

"My mother showed me the best attitude towards money, which is prudence. She also taught me to use money to do good things. After all, much has been given to me and it is only right that I give something in return. But for me to continue giving, I need to grow my money wisely. Good thing I get good financial advice from my advisers."

It's time!
Call 849-9888

Want some advice on how to grow your money?
Ask Lucy on itstime.com.ph or talk to a Sun Life adviser

Sun Life Financial

Abacádabra

By Kaye G. Lupo
Contributor

ABACÁ Boutique Resort + Restaurant boasts an oceanfront spa.

GLOBAL COUPLE Jason and Anna Hyatt seems to have the much sought-after magic wand in Cebu's hospitality industry. Their second venture, Mayo Mexican Restaurant and tequila lounge, is the newest hotspot in the city for tourists and locals alike who can't seem to get enough of their authentic Mexican cuisine and imported 100-percent agave-tequilas.

It is their first endeavor, however, that is in the international limelight. Abacá Boutique Resort + Restaurant, their private paradise in Mactan, notably made its way to last year's Condé Nast Traveler's Annual Hot List, Destinations Magazine's 2009 Luxe List, as well as Discovery Magazine, Cathay Pacific's in-flight magazine's resolute new hotel and best new spa list.

Jason appreciatively credits Abacá's international fanfare to the personalized service they offer, thanks to the training they had undergone with Abacá's general manager Glenn Yiusan, who is also now a partner in all of the Hyatt's endeavors. Jason describes Abacá's service as "Chic." Our servers are attentive and efficient but at the same time, the service they offer is laid back, not intrusive or over-eager. And we wear every gown to the resort as a VIP."

The rooms

A complete holiday destination, Abacá boasts an oceanfront spa, which offers rejuvenating botanical facials, heavenly therapeutic massages, and nourishing cocoa-made body treatments using natural, aromatic and indigenous ingredients developed and produced by Anna.

An exclusive getaway with just six sumptuous suites and three sprawling villas — two with plunge pools — you practically have the resort to yourself. Jason likens a stay in Abacá to "staying in your own home—a nine-bedroom home."

Hong Kong-based journey Jaya Companion designed the spacious accommodations in a distinctive style with ethnic touches to showcase the beauty of its surroundings, an aesthetic which she refers to as "contemporary Filipino heritage." Her design brings out the timeless beauty and charm of the region with whitewashed walls accented with dark woods and natural stones.

Filipino antiques, wood carvings and lanspoke Buntoth Cobonpue accent pieces give the rooms character while Abaca, spa bathrooms with polished tubs and organic rain showers, botanical-based toiletries, leather top beds with contemporary soft linens, Jim Thompson silk pillows, LED TV's and an up-to-date DVD selection in your suite will give you utmost comfort and luxury. The necessities of life are at your beck and call with 24-hour butler service from whom you can ask for just about anything from shaker to wine supplements.

You can also indulge in botanical spa services in the privacy of your suites, or you can enjoy your meals on your private terrace or garden, which has panoramic views of the ocean.

Abacá is not only a romantic getaway for

ABACÁ/SHANGRI-LA

BANANA REPUBLIC
Life At Work

GARDEN pool villa

OCEANFRONT Spa Villa

GRANDE Pool Villa

Abacádabra

Turn to page A9

MAIN pool panorama

MAIN pool view from Master Grandeur Suite

couples, but it is also a family resort. Aba-ca's amenities include nanny quarters, a separate private room with en suite bathroom facilities, cable TV, air conditioning and daily breakfast.

Dazzling dishes

Meals are something to be specially relished at Abaca with the food impressive both on the plate and the palate. Sous-executive chef Takshi Watson, who hails from New Zealand, has played around with Japan's Mediterranean-Californian inspired menu. Watson discloses that his food philosophy is very similar to Jason's, that is, they both believe in letting the flavor of the food speak for itself. It's really his cooking "honest food."

Wine dining is such a loose term now and a lot of confusion now comes with eating out. At Abaca, we don't claim to be a fine dining restaurant. Our food is anything but pretentious. In fact, I'd say we make simple comfort food—something like what your mom used to make," Watson explains. "We are a resort after all so we want the simplicity and ease of resort life reflected in our food and your dining experience."

Simple food in Abaca lingo is anything but mediocre cuisine though. Enjoy a mix of high-quality imported ingredients and the island's freshest seafood and fabulously fresh, often organic produce. Watson's dishes are refined and honest to goodness delicious, with a fine balance between rich ones and intense flavors.

He is assisted by a young team of kitchen staff, mostly female, who, three years ago, had absolutely no cooking experience.

"I have traveled the world cooking, and I am amazed at what Jason has taught the girls. I would relish the chance to put some of the girls here up against sous-chefs and pastry professionals. Although their flavors might not equal those with formal culinary education), their standard, technique, speed and accuracy is compelling. I hope to train the staff more in running a kitchen though—the business side, cost management, dish costing, nutrition, kitchen design, menu design. The list goes on," he says.

Abaca patron favorites include the whole lemon-roasted chicken, spiced beef empanadas with tomato ajo and salsa roja, roasted prawns with brioche and macadamia, foie gras with apple turnover and guava jam, and the universally appealing 40-inch Tbar brioche. The Angus rib-eye is on a class of its own here with the beef flown in chilled—never frozen—weekly from the US and aged in a chiller for an additional 14-14 days before it hits your plate.

Vegetarians can rejoice with Watson's offer of "tell me what you want, and I'll make it for you."

"We like to make vegetarians or anybody with particular dietary requirements feel special! I will personally go to their table to clarify what it is exactly they want. Most other places will give a vegetarian a risotto or pasta...that's simply the chef showing his dislike of vegetarians or straightforward laziness," Watson divulges with a wink.

The thoughtfully crafted and very approachable wine list is a fitting companion to the menu with an eclectic mix of over 200 wines to suit any budget, arranged by grape variety to make it easier for novice oenophiles to select a suitable bottle. Abaca's cocktail list, which uses only the finest premium spirits for pure, potent libations includes their celebrated mojito, sipping tequilas and a full selection of single malts.

Despite the lavish accommodations and plush amenities, excellent service and phenomenal fare, Jason maintains that Abaca is an affordable luxury. With rates beginning at P13,600++ it's no wonder that travelers set under the resort's spell.

Abaca Boutique Resort + Restaurant is in Puerto Pequeño Road, Mactan Island, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu. Call (32) 495 3452; e-mail relax@abacaresort.com; visit www.abacaresort.com.

CABANA by the main pool

Gila gumbo

WINE-BREAKING ceremony by Roland Porras, Sun Cruises general manager

SCI president Rolen la Umali

Seeing Manila—from the bay

The garish lights of Roxas boulevard seem more attractive when seen from aboard Sun Cruises' MV Spirit of Manila

By Arnado Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

IT WAS supposed to be a sunset cruise along historical Manila Bay but the skies were overcast. A light rain fell, and the setting sun refused to show itself. Oh well, this was to be expected because it's the rainy season.

The event was the launch of Sun Cruises' 8th cruise of Manila, a passenger ferry boat with a speed of 12 knots with a banquet/cocktail setup capacity for 99-120 passengers. Its three main air-conditioned, semi-breaking and bell (ringing) ceremonies.

"Manila Bay is the window to Manila and the Philippines for foreign tourists," said Roberto A. Umali, chief operating officer of Magsaysay Transport & Logistics Group.

"Not many see the Manila skyline from the bay. This is part of the experience of any tourist."

And, declared Sun Cruises general manager Roland Porras, "Manila Bay is one of the best natural harbors of the world."

The ship has an open-air upper deck and an air-conditioned lower deck with a table groaning with food. The satisfying buffet lunch almost everything (except the soup). A jazz singer and musicians entertained the diners in the upper deck.

As the cruise got under way, the drowsy continued and waiters began to build up overhead, and we then gently left into Cavalcades along the riders. There were not strong enough to reach the tables near the railing. The waters were calm.

SUN CRUISES' MV Spirit of Manila

BEING IN

MANILA Ocean Park executives

Seeing Manila–from the bay

From page D1

Gliding around

The Manila skyline was visible for a time, then faded as the lights (too many of them) along Roxas Boulevard native to Mly. and dusk fell. The garish lights of the boulevard seems more attractive when seen from a dis-

tance.

The ship just glided along around the area, and we don't bother about Corregidor. That's another story. I mean another cruise (part of San Corazon). In an hour's time it was over.

Couldn't they make it in two hours? Bliss. So this social drinker capped the evening with an ice-cold San Mig Light on board.

The MV Spirit of Manila is docked near the Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas [Folk Arts Theater] at the CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard. It has regular sunset cruise schedules. Thursdays-Sundays. Call 5275555 or visit www.corregidorphilippines.com.

There are also plans for sunrise cruises with breakfast for joggers.

BUFFET spread

LOUNGE deck of MV Spirit of Manila

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Tour packages cater to diverse travelers

By Anne Jamiero

SINGAPORE AIRLINES (SIA) and its sister packages good until 2021. Enjoy a second stop, all-inclusive package, including accommodations and meals (depending on hotel), to exciting destinations in Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

For $949, enjoy three days and two nights in Singapore; for $986, Penang, Singapore, Siem Reap (three days, two nights); for $1,093, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney (four days, three nights); for $1,349, Maldives (four days, three nights); and for $1,371, Auckland and Christchurch (four days, three nights).

Packages are one-way starting from $949.00 per week to spend all-in[illegible] day in Singapore prior to flying off to your dream vacation, treat yourself at the Singapore Stopover Holiday Package starting at $99. That's inclusive of hotel accommodation, transfers from airport to hotel, admission to seven key attractions such as Singapore Zoological Gardens and Sentosa, unlimited rides on the Hop on Hop on Bus, and lunches and toast set at Ya Kun Kaya Toast, an international calling card, a voucher worth US$10 for dining in the city and shopping vouchers worth S$40 each to shop at Singapore Changi Airport.

"Where we put our price, that's all inclusive, that's all you ever have to pay for anyway proud to be the first to do that in the industry. You will not get any surprise charges or hidden charges from us. What you see is for us is what you pay," said Andrew Bechman, general manager of Singapore Airlines Philo Ltd.

MALDIVES, and Coromandel, New Zealand (right)

With four daily flights from Manila to Singapore, it's now more convenient than ever to plan a connecting flight via the Lion City from Davao through SIA's partner airline, SilkAir, travelers from Cebu and Davao will have access to exciting destinations without the hassle of flying to Manila.

Flying daily from Cebu and four times a week from Davao, SilkAir is the gateway from Singapore to Mt. Everest (Kathmandu), Phuket, Chengdu, Ghangzhou, Chennai, Delhi, Surabaya, Indonesia, Siem Reap (Indochina), Penang, Malacca, Yangon, Myanmar; Chiang Mai, Thailand. KrisFlyer miles earned with SIA can redeem SilkAir flights and vice versa.

Like the multi-awarded SIA, SilkAir has also numerous awards under its belt, including the prestigious Skytrax 2009 World Airlines Awards for Best Regional Airline.

"What we are offering is a completely different product. We give our customers real value for money. From service to food, from facilities to aircraft—we have the passengers in mind all the time," said Benita Dy, manager, marketing communications and services, Singapore Airlines.

The Maldives package, for instance, has same-day flight connections, even when flying from Cebu or Davao via SilkAir. Time considerations of arrival and departure, said Dy has been carefully calculated by SIA to make sure its passengers are never stressed out or hurried.

Its said SIA aircrafts are wide-bodied777's and that even economy passengers will be comfortable in their leisure seats that recline up to 35 degrees. Business class passengers can relax in their spacious flat-bed seats. Flights from Manila will accommodate 350 Class passengers.

Gourmet food is always better, and this can mean all cuisine, Dy said. In-flight entertainment includes on-demand AV systems and music selections.

SIA's packages are now diverse, for people opting for sports tourism, eco-tourism, cultural immersion or shopping ventures.

"With SilkAir, we now fly to all five continents with the most number of destinations," Dy said.

IN THIS ISSUE
Shangri-La in Sabah /F1

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

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After 30 years, back to diving in Malahibong Manok and Bonito Islands

Even with the absence of fishes, it's an adventure —the view of the islands, azure waters and juvenile marine life are a revitalizing journey from the urban jungle

CULEBRA reefish

By Carlos Santos-Viola
Contributor

SATURDAY is nearly here and it's time to make our dive plans," Ramon Nakpil told me. Tagging along in this dive was my wife and buddy Linda, who prepared sandwiches for hearty lunch and snacks, plus rockskippers Mikko Rubio and Dennis Nakpil.

We opted to visit Malahibong Manok and Bonito Islands off Batangas. Our route took us through Cavite and Alfonso along the old national road to Batangas City. This scenic route is covered with the lush vegetation inherent in the provinces of Batangas, with luxurious trees, rural communities and provincial homes encountered in endless angles from the main road.

With the southwest monsoon winds, or habagat, beginning in May, we took off from Barangay Talaga, where culinary we were permitted people to board the Sampan as shore.

Talaga is a small fishing village to the east side of the municipality of Nasugbu across Barangay Bay. It has a small port where residents of Maestrahan Island board banka to and from their homes. This is also the place to buy ube to harvest season.

Progress has crept into this once sleepy place. San Miguel Corp. has built a flour milling facility nearby. Talaga now has a small economy port with concession stalls, and on narrow one-way street hassles with public jeeps and tricycles.

I was happy to see that our longtime boatman, Ading, had expanded his services from a small concern that accommodated passengers of smaller forms.

We had dove in the Malahibong Manok and Bonito Islands more than 30 years ago. I still recall my feeling of excitement and fearlessness when I ventured into unexplored sites, inspired by Jacques Cousteau in his early documentary films. The dolphin pods swimming parallel to our boats each-

AFTER 30 YEARS (2)

AUTHOR'S WIFE Linda in Culebra Island

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How to re-ask an old philosophy — and the magnificence of Jaipur

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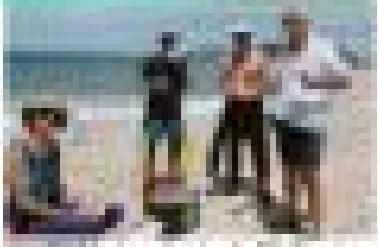
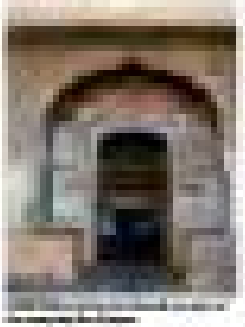
After 30 years, back to diving at Mabahibong Manok . . .





Everyday is Buy One, Get One Day at Savemore Pasong Tamo

PLDT

SMART

BABY COMPANY'S BREASTFEEDING FORUM

The Medical City OB-Gyn Dr. Maricel Vergel-De Dios shares to moms, "What you eat and drink is your baby's main source of nourishment".

Breastfeeding advocate and International Board Certified Lactation Counselor Ms. Nona Andaya-Castillo.

Ms. Abbie V. Yabot shows a volunteer mom how to properly hold baby with the cross-cradle breastfeeding position. Their position should be tummy-to-tummy to keep baby's neck straight for easy swallowing.

Event host and celebrity mom Christine Bersola-Babao with her 7-month-old son, Antonio Francesco.

In celebration of the National Breastfeeding Month this August, Baby Company held a series of forums to educate and encourage moms on its importance. The first stop was at the Event Center of SM Megamall last August 1, then at SM City Fairview last August 8.

Both events hosted by Tintin Bersola Babao were well attended by expectant moms, first time parents, and moms who also brought along their adorable babies.

They learned relaxation techniques ideal for the lactating period from breastfeeding advocate Ms. Nona Andaya-Castillo, as well as breastfeeding tips from certified counselor Ms. Abbie V. Yabot.

Dr. Maricel Vergel de Dios, OB Gynecologist at the Medical City, shared her expert knowledge on nutrition and wellness during pregnancy and lactation. Guests had the chance to learn even more during the open forum after the lectures. Here are some things they learned:

- Proper positioning is the key to a positive breastfeeding experience for both mom and bay. That's why it's important to latch baby immediately after birth.
- When breastfeeding, don't force baby by putting pressure on his head. Instead gently support his neck.
- Moms can increase their milk supply by eating food with lactogenic properties such as leafy greens like malunggay, as well as garlic, carrots, grains, and legumes.
- On the go moms can opt for healthy fast foods like fruit cups, yogurt, raisins, whole grain cereal or instant oatmeal.
- Avoid caffeine, herbal tea, alcoholic drinks, instant noodles, raw eggs, unpasteurized dairy, over ripe fruits and some seafood, which might contain mercury.
- Day old babies can also be trained to drink mother's milk from a cup.

The Breastfeeding Forum was held in partnership with The Medical City and the SM Breastfeeding Committee, as well as Chicco, Philips Avent, Ai-non Baby, and Pigeon. Baby Company also extends its warm appreciation to Dr. Maricel Vergel de Dios.

This is one of the many exciting events of Baby Company, which is located in all SM Department Stores and at specialty stores at The Podium, Power Plant Mall, and The Annex at SM City North EDSA. Also visit our website at www.babycompany.com.ph. For updates on baby care tips, events, and activities, be a fan of its Facebook page.

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Agnes Locsin's 'Sayaw, Sabel' features scarred women /3

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Shangri-La in Sabah

TESSA!
Rissa Prieto-Valdes

I found the 'Lost Horizon' at Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort on Pantai Dalit beach in Sabah, Borneo

WHERE IS SHANGRI-LA? It can be a fictional place, most famously described by James Hilton in his novel, "Lost Horizon," as a "mystical, harmonious valley, gently guarded from a harmony."

It can also be an imaginary place, some remote paradise that I dream about, full of peace, beauty and peacefulness. Sort of a secluded hideaway that the hobby and I can run off to one day, and believe me, that would be a fantasy.

Even better there's all that a resort Shangri-La is today—an icon of the hotel industry, famous for its luxury and exceptional quality. And just last month, I delightfully discovered another Shangri-La, just a two-hour plane ride from Manila.

Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort is set on Pantai Dalit beach in Sabah, Borneo. Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Sabah, is where you fly into to get to this tropical paradise. This Malaysian city is a growing resort destination due to its proximity to tropical islands, lush rain forests and Mount Kinabalu.

The best way to get to KK is via Cebu Pacific. Now our country's largest airline in terms of passenger volume, Cebu Pacific flies to KK thrice a week on a schedule perfect for an extended weekend—the perfect romantic getaway or short family vacation.

Their flights now leave on nine 92 per-

PLAYING Dan Pepper and Sea Princess at river cruise

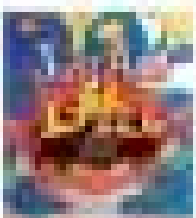
CEBU Pacific Air team leader of Cabin Crew International Royd Clarisa, lady on pilot Capt. Brooke Castillo (one of the first female jet pilots in the Philippines) and cabin crew member Desiree Lim with Sea Princess on Osaka flight

And the SM Super Chef winner is...

Paris home designed by Pinoy designer lands in Vogue Living

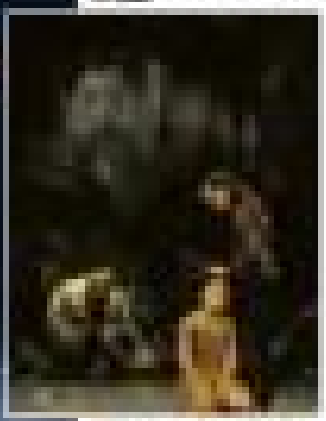
Exclusive to Jollibee Kids Club members:

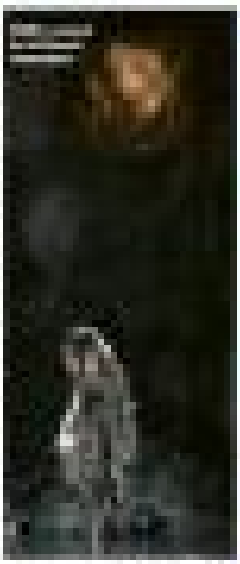
Grab a free Pinoy storybook on August 15 at Jollibee

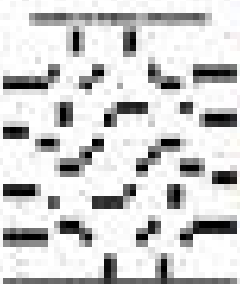


WENDY MURDOCH

Agnes Locsin's 'Sayaw, Sabel' features scarred women







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CEBU Pacific corporate communications specialist Michelle de Guzman flanked by Sea Princess and Popper Technology at the international airport counter

HEADED home with young boys Lucciano and Jaco Hopenyoung at Cebu Pacific KK counter

DOLPHIN at Dubi Bay Golf and Country Club: Patti Salvador, Sea Princess, Cathy Hopenyoung, director of golf Aaron Johnson, Cebu Hopenyoung and Popper Technology

BASIA Rio's director of communications Regina Solit and resort staff holding an goodbye with a song

JOY Manio, resort's activity coordinator for KK Watersports, with formation crab shell

Shangri-La in Sabah

from page F1

cess of the time, and with their fun games onboard, it is sure to be a no-stress vacation. I also love their www.cebupacificair.com website, which allows me to shop for the most affordable fares.

Accompanying me on the trip was my daughter Athena and my first traveling buddy, Pepper Technology. Pepper and I had just arrived the day before from Thailand, and practically had less than 24 hours in Manila before jetting off again.

Nestled in Shangri-La's Rasa Ria is like arriving in a virgin tropical paradise. It's surrounded by over 150 hectares of lush tropical vegetation, including a unique nature reserve.

We were greeted by Cathy Hopenyoung, Shang's director of sales and marketing, and Regina Solit, director of communications. Clearly, even in Malaysia, the Pinoy flag flies high.

Among the resort's distinctions is Spa Land Makan Street, capturing the nostalgia of Malaysia's heritage of simple food stalls set along a foliage-lined street. You can easily dine all night among the different flavors of Malay cuisine in the different open-front shop-house stalls.

By day, this breathless makeover is transformed into a pool bar offering Asian and Western snacks, fruit juices and refreshing drinks. Athena loved the pool, complete with water slides, bubble pools and spouting fountains.

Our Ocean Wing room was over 80 square meters, and the large room to entertain guests well-designed. In the terrace overlooking the beautiful beach is a giant bath. To Athena, it's a move from the outdoor pool to the "indoor" one. Ocean Wing guests also have their own pool and private restaurant, if all adds up to a very special experience.

Just like other Shangri-La resorts, such as Mactan and Boracay, kids have their own Kids' Club. I dispatched Athena there for art activities while I went out to explore the rest of the resort.

The hotel organized a river village cruise along Menggalong River. On the way to the water village of the sea gypsies, we cut trips for crabs, and I was lucky enough to catch one for myself. Of course, I just took photos and threw Mr. Crab back in to the Menggalong.

After all, why catch my own when there are so many restaurant eateries to explore? One of my favorites was Coast, the excellent eatery in the South China Sea, with its stunning sunset view. The menu includes fiber-optic jellyfish chandeliers.

Flavors

Athena loves Japanese food, so her favorite was Kuzuri, the classic Japanese-style outlet. The word means "resonance" and, indeed, Mount Kinabalu is the region's highest domain and the spiritual of Sabah.

At Kuzuri, we met Sawawa Yamanaka. We were all entertained by chef Gary, who did his best to teach us how to toss a few eggs and create a smiley face fried rice. It's all good, but the eating is better.

We Indian food lovers, Nasai Flavours of India creates an ideal setting to savor the refined cuisine of Northern India and spicy specialties from coastal Goa. The flavors are further enhanced by innovative Indian cocktails and their signature mango lassi.

Sabah is the favorite restaurant of Elephant Safari stylist Geoff Morris. It was also a new haunt for Popper, who usually avoids Indian food. Begins informed us that Rasa was awarded Best Indian Restaurant by Time Out Malaysia for two years in a row.

Popper's idea of Shangri-La is food, but coming to Rasa Ria Resort also made him more appreciative of the fauna and flora. Organizers Flora of Malaysia, we enjoyed the fascinating Nature Trail to be took Athena on a tour of the National Reserve Rehabilitation Center of Sabah's remarkable trees.

Exceptional stylist Fatih Tekvedan also took his turn taking care of Athena. He is now in Bangkok with the resort, after leaving there for weeks on creatively improve the resort's look.

My partner in shopping, Patti Salvador, is where we find the best Batiks pewter and enamel products. Borneo Trading Post is a big, crafty shop, and Cuts Tavern Sunday Market is a must-visit shopper's treat too.

If my hubby Dennis had been able to get himself off his work desk for a few weekend watch us, he would surely have loved the the resort's Dalit Bay Golf Club & Spa. This 18-hole course is reportedly designed around the lush and often-charming views of Mount Kinabalu.

To unwind, I played 18 holes with excellent golfer Cebu Hopenyoung, who took a video of our exciting game. After the round, I headed straight to the spa for some soothing pleasure.

Check out Rasa Ria Resort at www.shangri-la.com. They have an ongoing Golfer's Dream package, which includes three nights plus golf, breakfast and complimentary Internet access.

My golfer dad, Alex Prieto, is already planning the family getaway for his birthday in November, and we are all looking forward to finding out Shangri-La's secret again.

E-mail the author at snapshotsea@inquirer.com.ph

PARAFI Shangri-La Rasa Ria owner with charitable friends Edd Fuentes, Maggie Gerets, Kara Tingo, Nikka Aiken, Ariel Lucsala, Eva Princess, Cat Jardine, Johanna Garcia and Annie Roger

EXCEPTIONAL management team of Rasa Ria with the traveling group

TOP: Lost chef Chee Chai Hee and director of sales and marketing Cathy Hopenyoung

ROOM Japanese Restaurant chef Gary with pretty good Vanessa Fernando

NATURAL Reserve Orangutan Rehabilitation Center head ranger Mahir and his expert caretakers

THE SPA at Dalit Bay, voted Best Spa in Tourism Malaysia 2009

SABAH'S playful otters, the orangutan

TRADITIONAL Sabah lady at river village

NATIVE crafts in Sunday street market at Gaya Street

TIMOTHY Wright, general manager at Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort, receiving the winning trophy from the Minister of Tourism for Excellence in Hotel Services—5 Star, at the prestigious Sabah Tourism Awards 2009

PARADISE found at Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort in Kota Kinabalu

EXPERT golfer Cebu Hopenyoung playing at Dalit Bay Golf and Country Club

KIDS' Club at Shang Resort, for art activities

MAJESTIC Mount Kinabalu

INTERESTING jellyfish chandeliers at Coast Restaurant

EXCITING pool and slide at Rasa Ria

SPACIOUS and luxurious Ocean Wing guest room

Sunday LIFESTYLE

To feedback e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Ayala Malls builds new frontiers

By MAIGE C. ENRIQUEZ

What used to be vast tracts of unused land in Angeles City have now become a handsome community, the Marquee Place, at Ayala Land pa-parehi, which is joined by a mall complex, the Marquee.

Ever since it opened in 2008, the Marquee, which is adjacent to the city hall, has become Angeles's new convergence zone. On weekdays, office workers take a picnic around the park. Marquee with its 400 retail outlets, Metro Supermarket and Department Store as the anchor stores are packed on weekends. Mall goers enjoy their meals while savoring the view of Mount Arayat. Children enjoy the water features.

Families don't have to travel around Pampanga for their favorite dishes. Marquee has called the best of Kapampangan cuisine by inviting backyard businesses into the mall.

Susie's, known for its pancit palabok and inasal, Nathaniel's for its bulalo pandan and Kabigting's halo-halo have increased their market share through the Marquee mall.

Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) will be developing another community of town houses, condos and townhouses projects rediscovering century near the mall to meet the demands of the growing population.

More important, the development is turning a bland zone into promising place to live and work.

Ayala Malls has become central to the future of a community's growth, partly because its shopping centers are hotbeds of innovation and economic growth.

Over the years, the malls have come up with remarkable concepts: integrated community building (developments mixing residential, retail, offices and entertainment in one area), the mixed-use centers, the mall as a total entertainment hub, the open-air development, the integration of landscape and interiors and pedestrian-friendly streets and sustainable practices.

As a rule decade ahead of it, Ayala Malls is bullish about its more than 10 projects all over the country.

"Our emphasis is to expand the business," said Mahric Altonaras, ALI senior vice-president and head of Ayala Malls Group (AMG).

The growing economy, the optimism in the new government, the brisk sales in the stores and the long waiting list of merchants propelled AMG's expansion. "When we move to other locations, the same level of demand is present. Merchants want to get additional space," said Tony Aquino, ALI president.

Consider G. Dizon, VP and head of business development and strategic planning, said its recent acquisitions are targeted as the new regional malls. "There's a lot of advanced opportunities for the higher-end market and gaps in the broad it," said Dizon on the mall market.

URBAN RENEWAL

Aquino said the mall business is a very critical factor in the overall Ayala Land development. "As soon as you put up the mall, it generates activities in a specific location. It makes it easier for us to put in other products – hotel and a residential component. It can enhance the value of products. In the end, our development with its proper mixed-use strategy becomes the center of gravity in that location."

The transformation of Makati is the most dramatic example of urban renewal, spurred by a shopping center. It was grassland and a trail for equestrians before it became the Makati Commercial Center with its arcade of stores, a grocery and a theater.

"These types of developments were supplemented by hotels, residential villages and offices surrounding it," said Aquino. "These elements made the whole development highly successful. Ayala Land takes a bolga area, puts in a master plan and executes it in a way that all the pieces support each other."

Makati now has a culture of Manila. Today, the CBD with Glorietta and Greenbelt at the heart is the country's nerve center. The Glorietta is being redeveloped along with more hotels, business processing outsourcing centers, condos and offices.

Bonifacio Global City is rising as another prosperous and creative district, attracting foreign banks, advertising agencies and arts groups. Bonifacio High Street, which introduced the open-air development, and Market! Market! are outdoored by Serendra, other offices and condos.

Alabang used to be a vast mango plantation. Now, the Alabang Town Center has been a social hub of the neighboring villages and is supported by the Madrigal Business Park and Ayala Alabang Village.

Retail in Tile. Now want to be a supermarkets. Now it is hosted as the future Makati of the South.

In Davao, there's the upcoming Abreeza (meaning "southern breeze"). Its mall component will take the lead in opening the location. It complements Abreeza Place, with its development of a high-rise condo, hotel and BPO center.

"The mall becomes an engine for growth and urban renewal," said Dizon. "After you put up the mall, everything else follows. Property values go up."

Therefore, business has a civic angle. Altonaras said that as part of Ayala's corporate social responsibility, the company will improve the park, and in turn help the local government revitalize the city.

Solaired in Novaliches is a 30-minute ride from Diliman, Calamba and Silang, Cavite. It's been said that the recent developments have spurred the appreciation of land value in Sta. Rosa and its neighboring towns.

GETTING TRENDS

Reverse Tomeldan, vice-president and AMG chief operating officer, pointed out the Ayala Malls is always at the cutting edge. The Ayala Malls Group fosters in its customers, applies the best business practices and continually introduces innovative concepts.

In the mid-'90s, Ayala Malls introduced the dining-and-entertainment concepts with restaurant-lines such as Hard Rock Café and Friday's and extending the mall hours until late at night. In 2000, Greenbelt 2 became the first mall anchored by a Bonifacio park.

The integration of landscape with the interiors has been a trademark such as the oversized courtyard of Eastwood Cyberone in the town plaza of Alabang Town Center; the mall-in-a-concept in Bonifacio High Street, the forest lodge in Ayala Cebu's The Terraces that are oriented towards the garden and activity center.

In the '60s and '70s, the Makati Commercial Center started the arcade concept. "It was intended for people to walk. Now we are non-habitability focused. We are encouraging pedestrians," said Aquino.

As part of Makati's master plan, the developer built a kilometer-long connection of covered, elevated walkways which stretches from Paseo de Roxas to Ebloe have proven beneficial to commuters.

"The walk is pleasant as they are protected from the elements and are visually stimulated by the new Ebloe Bridge," said Aquino. "For Filipinos this is difficult to change. But with the infrastructure and culture of this place, we are quite happy that it has been favoring pedestrians."

By yearend, Ayala Triangle Gardens will have a dining concentrated to the working class.

"Office workers prefer to work beside a commercial development. It enhances the live, work, play environment and the quality of life. In the past we've had stand-alone mall or residential developments. Now it's good to have office, residential and malls together," said Tomeldan.

"Our unique competitive advantage is the large-scale development and making sure all the product values are there," said Aquino.

At the onset of the green building trend, Ayala Land has been adopting eco-friendly principles in construction and design.

The LP- Ayala Land Technohub was rebuilt under for its landscaping from the waste water plant of the neighboring Manila Water Services. Trillonia's roof garden set the local trend in green malls. Market Market's has a charming container vegetable garden. Greenbelt 5 has its grass roof to buffer the heat, ice thermal cooling and dual piping system.

HIDDEN MEANING

The hard work of the team has been paying off. Ayala Malls has garnered eight awards four of which are in the gold category in the Asia Pacific Awards by the International Council of Shopping Centers for mall community relations, design and development.

The Urban Land Institute Awards, touted as the Oscars of the real estate industry, gave Greenbelt 3 and Greenbelt 5 the 2003 and 2006 Awards for Excellence, respectively.

Trillonia bagged the Silver Award (2008) from the ICSC for showing that its lush roof garden can also be a profitable space used for outdoor retail and special events.

"We've been getting visitors from UE, Asia and Europe who want to see Greenbelt," says Tomeldan.

Aquino points out that mall development goes beyond landholding planning directories of malls. He says that the company brings in fresh ideas from abroad and offers innovations that would be beneficial to the local community.

"That's the social responsibility of the retail experience," he says.

Over a thousand workers are hired in the construction of a new mall. When it opens, it provides some 2,000 jobs.

Since the big malls are complemented by new BPO centers, people are encouraged to stay in these areas.

"They don't have to migrate to Manila and break up their families. The development is a great opportunity for them to enjoy the same level of amenities as in Manila."

Abreeza, the upcoming regional mall in Davao City, is supported by Ayala Land's residential and business developments.

Bonifacio High Street, the country's first open-air development, draws a regular crowd from Serendra and nearby offices.

Greenbelt 3 introduced the integration of landscape with architecture. Greenery and water features are central to Ayala malls.

Marquee Mall in Angeles City has become a hub in Central Luzon.

Mahric Altonaras, ALI senior vice-president and Ayala Malls Group Head: 'The business has a civic angle.'

Tony Aquino, ALI president, calls the nationwide expansion plan as a "geography lesson."

Greenbelt leads the way

Ayala Malls
THE BEST
OF THE BEST
OF THE WORLD
IS HERE

More Ayala Malls rising across the islands

By MARGIE C. ENRIQUEZ

With attractive markets without malls and a vibrant retail industry, Ayala Malls Group is promoting more shopping and lifestyle opportunities across the nation.

Said Dondon G. Bonn, vice-president and head of business development and strategic planning, "We can capture new areas where growth opportunities are available. We get referrals for acquisitions and look at the cities to determine which areas will be prioritized. The choice depends on the prospects of the area in the growth centers and the readiness of the market for a mall development."

There is a total 18 in preparation, ranging from neighborhood to regional centers. Malls are diversified in room assembling to grow leasable areas and product offering, a standard set by the International Council of Shopping Centers.

The upcoming regional centers, slated for 2019 and their components, are located in Davao, Cagayan de Oro, and Iloilo.

There is a community centers which offer the basic needs of the immediate neighborhood – supermarket, drugstore, salon, bank – and some retail. "You don't have to drive all the way to the mall to get what you need," said Bonn.

The neighborhood and community centers to be completed by yearend are in Ayala Triangle Gardens, Bagaio and Tila Pena.

Big or small, the shopping centers are united for their convenience, clustering the stores that are appealing to the target consumers. As in all Ayala Malls, they'll find the anchor supermarkets and department stores, the trendy brands, restaurant chains, salons and amusement.

The bigger malls offer a gym and a hospital-based diagnostic center. In the area of the malls and lifestyle centers are the activity area, the grocery and stunning water features.

Moreover, there are architectural elements that lend a sense of place such as murals depicting Filipino culture in Alabang Town Center.

"When we do our tenant-mix development, we always ask what can we do differently? What has not been thought of? We continue to challenge ourselves," said Marian Africano, senior vice-president and head of Ayala Malls Group. "We focus on what the market needs. There's no one formula for every mall. We put in our brand yet we localize the flavor to the customer and retailers."

The Ayala Malls Group is looking for interesting ideas for its different market segments. It has moved like crawdads to look for the best cuisine and retail in the market and invites them as a partner in the mall.

Sometime offers Mary Grace and its pastries, Sonia's Cupcakes, Martha's Cakes and Bakeshop. The mall has made them into brands. Cebuano brands such as Penshoppe, Bo's Coffee and Kandilicious, an Australian brand originally created in Ayala Cebu, gained more prominence when they came to Metro Manila.

"We provide local retailers the opportunity to expand through our malls. At the same time, we are helping Manila-based retailers expand to the provinces," said Rowena M. Tomaliñas, Ayala Malls' vice-president and chief consulting officer.

"The key to innovation and how we translate concepts into reality," says Africano. "We deliver openly what we promise."

Dondon added, "We try to develop the products with them. We talk about products they plan to bring so we can allot the space. It also depends on what the mall wants to achieve," said Bonn.

"The consistently gets excited when they hear about the opening of a new Ayala mall," said Tomaliñas. "Eventually, it becomes a landmark."

The new Ayala Center will be transformed into the country's top shopping center into a mixed-use development.

The Central Zone of Bonifacio High Street, designed for premium brands, extends the main street shopping experience.

Office workers can enjoy dining in this outdoor by at the Ayala Triangle Gardens. It will host popular and affordable restaurants.

Solenad 2, the new neighborhood center, will serve residents in Nuvali and neighboring towns.

METRO MANILA

AYALA CENTER

The flagship redevelopment is the transformation of Benavidez City's top shopping center into a mixed-use development. Aside from sporting a brighter and contemporary look and a new activity center, Glorietta 1 and 2 will be hosting offices and a business-man's hotel on the upper floors. Esperanza Drive will be widened and transformed into a Paseo Drive, studded by a canopy of trees. Ayala Center's expansion will be the home of new high-end developments: Ayala Land Premier's Park Terraces, Fairmont Hotel and Raffles Residences. Target date: 2021.

AYALA TRIANGLE GARDENS

If New York has Central Park, Makati CBD has the Ayala Triangle Gardens. Office workers can take their lunch breaks in the 1,500 sqm development. Existing dining concepts will be coming back as Starbucks, Manic Dots, and the old-standard Banapple, the bakery restaurant from Davao City, which attracts long queues. Target date: 2040.

BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY

The Central Zone of Bonifacio High Street embodies the "main-street" shopping experience. It will offer an exciting mix of shops and restaurants that address the trend toward luxury and avant-garde fashion, gourmet and adventurous dining for cosmopolitan shoppers. Central to the development is a big park surrounded by specialty shops and restaurants with terraces for a relaxed outdoor dining.

Corazon S. Dizon, vice-president and head of business development and strategic planning, "We are expanding outside the areas where we have a presence.

Rowena M. Tomaliñas, Ayala Malls' vice-president and chief operating officer: "Eventually, the mall become a landmark."

ALABANG

Alabang Town Center will include Metro Gaisano Department Store and Supermarket and an extension of the shopping centre. The redevelopment will include a plaza outside the main mall, al fresco dining, residential and office buildings and a hotel.

LUZON

BAGUIO

A retail component will complement the Baguio-Ayala Land Technohub, a BPO campus development in Camp John Hay. The architecture of this development is evocative of the American cottages built in the early 20th century in the hill station. It will provide the best of the local offerings and popular brands.

Tony T. Aquino, President of Ayala Land Jobs, "There's a large population of students who would like to stay in Baguio. We want the BPO mixed to the potential employees. That will serve as motivator for the customer base of the retail. There will be a mix of activities from the environs, supplemented by brands who want the green park of Baguio." Target date: 2021.

BACOLOD

The shopping complex will rise at the heart of Bacolod's lifestyle area. Since Subic is known for active sports and adventure, the mall's theme will exude this ambience. The basic dining and entertainment components will complement the sports-oriented lifestyle-ning. Target date: 2019.

NUVALI

Solenad 1, a neighborhood center in Nuvali, is an open-air lakeside development with restaurants such as Grassroots, Cookie and Italianni's. Solenad 3, the expansion will complement Solenad 1 by providing the basic needs of the residents in the area. It will have a supermarket, basic retail, and services. Target date: 2019 for Solenad 3.

VISAYAS, MINDANAO

CEBU

Ayala Center Cebu's hefty expansion of 34,000 sq.m. will include a link between the main mall and The Terraces, enhanced by landscaping and water features. The mall will open new apparel brands and specialty stores normally found in Greenbelt and Bonifacio High Street.

CAGAYAN DE ORO

A multi-level regional mall anchors a sustainable, mixed-use development in the heart of the city. It will answer to the needs of the local market's demand for name brands. Target date: 2019.

DAVAO

Located on the city's main artery, the three-story 50,000 sqm showcase will bring the best of Manila and Davao's brands. The space lends itself to hold flagship stores of local retailers and popular foreign brands. The mall design infuses local touches such as Visayan pulhons. With over 300 retail stores, it will also offer Alfresco Bites' organic bakery and café furnishings done by families in the Filomeño foundation, orchids, fruits, local crafts and modern retail concepts.

The management teams behind the Ayala Malls development, expansion and operations

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emerie G. Velarde

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'Sigwa' gets an 'A'

IN SPITE OF a raging controversy, Joel Lamangan's "Sigwa" got a grade of 'A' from the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB), an office under the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

Rufino, author Lualhati Bautista had pointed out similarities between her novel "Dekada'ysiyam" and the

US actor in Pinoy-made movie here on 'spiritual journey'

MICHAEL Madsen at a press con in Makati on Friday

By Marinel R. Cruz

HOLLYWOOD actor Michael Madsen, in town to promote his Pinoy-made sci-fi film, "Damage," describes this return trip to the Philippines as a "spiritual journey."

Madsen, 52, first came to the country in 2008 to make "Reel Raider" with the late director/producer Cirio Santiago. "I know he's been summoned. I've come to pay my respects," Madsen told Inquirer. "I have fond memories of working here with Cirio."

Friday morning shortly after arriving, the actor made sure to have some lambanog, a local coconut-based liquor. "[The late Hollywood actor] David Carradine said it was good. He was right," said Madsen.

He would like to visit Boracay Island in Aklan, the actor said. "Sounds like a nice place. It's good to get out of the US right

>> ACTOR, P2

This Angel wears Prada

Watch out, La Greta

By Krystal Sue Diego Jr.

SORRY, Angelica is genuinely confounded by all the attention showered on her "Maglaro-find" character, Isabelita Silva.

"In all my years in an actress, I've never experienced anything like this," she confessed to Inquirer. "People are texting me, commending me for what they believe is a job well done, or asking me about the lipstick or gown I wore in a particular episode. I feel gratified that many viewers are curious about and are involved in the show."

Imaginative minds are also fixated on the oh-so-convincing sparks between Angel and teenage Gretchen Barretto.

>> ANGEL, P2

"It's all my years as an actress, I've never experienced anything like this," says Angel.

US actor in Pinoy-made movie here on 'spiritual journey'

From page H1

now, a lot of bad things are going on in my country."

One of the lead performers in memorable action movies "Kill Bill" and "Reservoir Dogs," among others, Madsen was set to attend last night's premiere of "Outrage," by Filipino filmmaker Joe Cruz, at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. Madsen is also scheduled to visit TV and radio stations before flying back to the United States on Aug. 27.

In "Outrage," Madsen plays Savagar, whom he describes simply as "an ex-Marine gunner out to get some money." The film is about a scientist gone wrong for a group of friends in Southern Georgia.

"I wish I had more time to work on the film," said Madsen. "I shot for only three days because I had to leave to make another film. But Joe is a genius who makes do with what he has. The movie didn't suffer."

Award-winning

"Outrage" won the 2009 Best Sci-Fi Picture award at the action on Film (AOF) International Festival in Pasadena, California. It was later screened at the 2010 Cannes International Film Festival in France.

Madsen, known for character roles, said: "I'm trying to get away from playing the bad guy. But with the US movie industry failing apart, I'm lucky to have a job. I was just so happy to do Outrage." Hollywood movies alternated with guys like Nick Cage, Brad Pitt and Bruce Willis. I do small films just to stay employed!...I have five kids."

He was born in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Virginia Madsen, actress Dorothy Jeakins, Hume Nelson and firefighter Calvin Madsen. Actress Virginia Madsen is his sister.

Madsen's acting career began at the Steppenwolf Theater Company in Chicago, as an apprentice for John Malkovich. At 25, Madsen made his first movie, "Against All Hope," then appeared in small independent productions till he moved to Los Angeles in 1984. That year, he played baseball player Bump Bailey in "The Natural" (1984).

He was also the rough/feathered of Susan Sarandon in "Thelma and Louise" (1991). In 1992, he landed the role of the eyeslashing, sadistic ex-con and jewel thief Mr. Blonde in the bloody Quentin Tarantino crime story, "Reservoir Dogs." He was also cast in "Die Another Day" and the film version of the Frank Miller graphic novel, "Sin City," plus "84 Minutes: The North Folly-wood Shootout" in 2003.

Last year, he appeared with Morris Chestnut and Kirk Harris in the boxing film, "Champion." He is expected to reprise his role as Bob in "Sin City 2," currently in pre-production.

A poet, too

Madsen has been married since 1996 to Deanna Morgan. He has two sons with ex-wife Jeannine Bassinette.

He is an accomplished poet. In 2005, 13 sketch Publications compiled his work and released "The Complete Poetic Works of Michael Madsen, Vol 1: 1995-2005." The same year, he released his first book of photography, "Signs of Life," and dedicated it to "Reservoir Dogs" co-star Chris Penn.

MICHAEL Madsen (r) visits with Filipino actor Wes Alvaro (with whom he worked on a Cris Santiago movie in 2008) and Hollywood-based Filipino director Ace Cruz

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"See It"

This Angel wears...

From page H1

roles on the ABS-CBN soap.

Angel and La Greta is the exact opposite of her onscreen persona, she thinks. Victoria, "Temptation" is sweet and thoughtful. She likes taking care of people and always brings lots of food to the set," Angel related. "She has her own air-conditioned bus, but she often hangs out with us. It's like the golden rotten down from her pedestal to mingle with mortals!"

Angel has conceded the role of real-life Ambassador to La Greta. "She has the money and the goods. I cannot compete with Gretchen when it comes to clothes."

However, Angel also makes sure that she will not be upstaged and/or drawn in a one of designer duds. "In our confrontation scenes, I make it a point to be dressed to the extreme; the makeup, the physical aspects," she said. "To me, what's more important are the emotions...the craft of acting."

Angel has had plenty of practice sharing the screen with beautiful and outspoken women. She hosted "E," with Claw Calvan and Angelica Panganiban for several years, and has been anchoring "Un Girls," with Iya Villania and Chesko Garcia for the past few years.

Most memorable

"I've been hosting lifestyle shows for over a decade now," she noted. "Lifestyle will never go out of style because I get to meet new people and try new adventures all the time."

Her most memorable "Un Girls" moment, thinks 232 episode, she said, was their Guam trip. "Iya, Chesko and I really bonded during that trip. Our relationship has evolved from an entertainer to colleagues to friends. Iya and I are sweating "Chesko" during our Sundays."

Each girl plays a specific role on the show and in their lives, she noted. "Chesko is our love guru. She often lots of tips about relationships and life. Iya keeps us on our toes. Iya challenges us to look good and stay fit always."

As for Angel?

"I am the chic (grandmother) of the group," she quipped.

Angel is also a firm supporter of indie films. She appeared in Ang Lee's debut movie, "Hong Kong," and in Jeng Arce's short films, "Bonsai" and "Temptekla."

"I am very choosy, but if I find the script challenging and meaty, we don't even have to talk about money...I believe in the drive, curiosity and passion of indie filmmakers," she said.

E-mail: bayanimusings@hotmail.com

New show for male viewers, too

Who knows what the daytime TV demographic has really become?

COREN and Carmina paved modest as morning show hosts.

ZOREN LEGASPI and Carmina Villaroel's new talk-variety show, "Love Is si Mister, Love Ko si Mista," debuted on GMA-7 last Monday, Aug. 9, and we made it a point to tune in because, as morning shows go, it tries to do something significantly different—namely, appeal not just to women, but to male viewers as well.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

This is an unusual development, and also a bit risky, since the undisputed television queen has been presumed to be a largely feminine preserve, because the male breadwinners are supposed to be in the office, but, more accurately, are working out of the home now, and some men have become breadwinners—so, who knows what the daytime TV demographic has really become?

Anyway, the new Zoren-Carmina show is having that there are enough men at home on weekday mornings to add a substantial (minus her of guys to its viewership—and, we've always been supportive of pundits that challenge conventional wisdom, so we wish the show well.

Predictable sequence

However, last Monday we were initially robbed the wrong way by the show's much too long and predictable title sequence, showing Zoren and Carmina waking up, going to the bathroom, getting ready to do the show etc. Oh, please, this predictable opener has been around since the early days of streaming TV.

Anyway we got over that slow and loose job and were straight—but, we were again disturbed, this time by Carmina's high, sharp and tinny speaking voice. Can't she lower and warm up its register? It was irritate some people enough for them not to watch the show.

That would be a pity, since Carmina's perky disdainer is good for a morning talk show, and the duo gnarly along quite deceivingly like simply shouldn't send-ass "perky" with "brazy and shelf, "Don't-all.

Zoren did better in the speaking department, but he was occasionally too slow and dour in his all that entertaining. Afterall, between Zoren and Carmina passed reunter so-overtop-their heels, and their first rehearsals had seem did prove the point that female and male points of view are and should coexist on daytime TV.

In addition, their "couple" guests for the day, Jerry de Leon and Inc. with Bikoys, and Ariel Rivera and Gelli de Belen, kept the pot stirred. nap pepps by enthusiastically participating in quizzes and other features that sought to clarify husband-wife relationships for couples belonging to different age groups.

In the process, viewers learned that, to resolve tensions and other problems, married partners should "discuss instead of confront", accept their loved ones for what they are-avoid behaving in a ego-egotism way at home because their kids may get the wrong ideas; not get into a holy rut; and generally treat each other with love and respect. Not bad for a seven-segment show, not bad at all.

And, the appearance of the hosts' lovely kids was a pleasant surprise, as well.

Now, if only the show could fix its initial problems or distractions, it should be on TV to stay.

'Sigwa' gets an 'A'

From page B1

screenplay of "Sigwa."

Citing the script as "insightful and effective," the CEB commended the producers and the filmmaker for attempting "to bridge the gap between art and mainstream cinema."

A CEB memo has said that the film "makes us confront our own beliefs and encourages us to take a stand."

A photo of "Sigwa" actress Angel Aquino

DARWIN Zuñiera in "Sigwa"

A photo of "Sigwa" actress Angel Aquino

A photo of "Sigwa" actress Angel Aquino

A photo of "Sigwa" actress Angel Aquino

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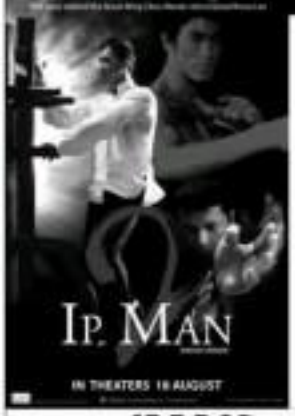

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2 SALT
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 GROWN UPS
5 STEP UP
6 STEP UP 2 (Digital 3D)
7 THE LAST AIRBENDER
8 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
9 TOKKEN
10 HATING KARATE

MANILA

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER
2 GROWN UPS
3 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
4 HATING KARATE / HATING KARATE
5 SALT
6 STEP UP 3
7 HATING KARATE / RECEPTION

METRO EAST

1 GROWN UPS
2 STEP UP 3 (Digital 3D)
3 STEP UP 3
4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 RECEPTION
6 SALT
7 THE LAST AIRBENDER
8 HATING KARATE

NOVALICHES

1 SALT
2 STEP UP 3
3 GROWN UPS
4 THE EXPENDABLES

FORUM ROBINSONS

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2 GROWN UPS
3 SALT
4 THE EXPENDABLES

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DASMARIÑAS

1 GROWN UPS
2 KILLERS
3 SALT
4 THE EXPENDABLES

STARMILLS

1 GROWN UPS
2 SALT
3 THE HOT TUB TIME MACHINE
4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 HATING KARATE
6 GROWN UPS

IMUS

1 GROWN UPS
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 SALT
4 KILLERS

ANGELES

1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 GROWN UPS
3 AMERICAN VIRGIN
4 SALT

TACLOBAN

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER
2 PREDATORS
3 SALT

DUMAGUETE

1 SALT
2 THE LAST AIRBENDER
3 PREDATORS

BACOLOD

1 STEP UP 3 (Digital 3D)
2 THE HOT TUB TIME MACHINE
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 SALT
5 HATING KARATE
6 GROWN UPS

ILOILO

1 STEP UP 3 (Digital 3D)
2 GROWN UPS
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 SALT
5 HATING KARATE
6 GHOST HOUSE

GENSAN

1 STEP UP (Digital 3D)
2 HATING KARATE
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2 THE LOSERS
3 SALT

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BINGE and Marvin: Read or let's chew?

Overheard

JAVIER Bardem says working with Julia Roberts in "Eat, Pray, Love" was easy. "I'm always saying that we all know the great actress that she is. But I didn't know the person and I was very impressed about how generous she is and how much fun it was to work with [her]." AP

Power couple

From page H4

dible)." The governor makes a camera appearance.

Schwarzenegger posted a video on Twitter Thursday showing him at a red-carpet event with Inslee the governor laughs. He also posted a picture of the two sweating inside. AP

Top of the tabloids

The top three hit stories in Inquirer.tabloid Bandera's last week. (And why we are stressed, if we are bored.)

- Robin Padilla's e Maribel Rodriguez sa show biz. (Sabay? Like from prison?)
- Mind be pa manager si Robin? —Maribel, DEDICATED
- Dalpac Warinda Jay Sklaerk Subway nandidiri ako! (Pinaamo sya virtual gallery. "Lumayo ka nanaman, it?")
- Kalandian ni Jenne Cortiz tapi ni Jennabelle Rama. (Type din ni ...)
- Love life ni Jason mamitra dahil kay Richard Gutierrez. (Maiintindihan ... kasi.)
- Engener Dominguez kay Wendell Ramos. Grabeng mjor ang pagkakaiban ha! (Ito very afraid.)
- Willie Revillame mmaapo sa Claire Seaton? (Bitong bitong ...)
- Mahirap Bruno, Bingbing Teresa nagdi-break na? (And we should be surprised because ...?)

Defying gravity

LOS ANGELES—How does normality creep, one on earth has been director Chris Nolan's "Inception," we see featuring actor Joseph Gordon-Levitt's explanation on how he prepared and did some of the remarkable stunts, especially the much-talked about gravity-defying hotel-corridor scene.

While Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hardy, Ken Watanabe and others in the cast had their share of stunts, Joseph find the most challenging ones in the movie about a team of modern-day warriors who are able to join in the dreams of others, to be the star of the dazzling "5000 Days of Summer" had in prospect figuratively for his acrobatic role in "Inception," which was shot mostly in a vast soundstage in England.

"The stunt team I worked with for months actually nominated me of little somersaults," said Joseph. "I was looking pregnant as I marched around. It felt like a bunch of 10-year-olds getting to run in their dreams and fantasies to defy gravity. I was so happy and thankful I got to do it."

He credited having to start physical training before shooting in England. He said actors normally do that so "it took a minute" for a motion.

But for "Inception," Joseph said, "I had to train so that I could actually pull off the stuff which is, to me, a much more fulfilling reason to go to the gym than to just look good."

After arriving in England, Joseph spent two and a half weeks of straight stunt training.

The hotel hallway scene, where the gravity-defying fight sequence would appear, was shot on rotating sets.

But those sets make him feel like he's on a hamster wheel?

"They built that corridor three times," said Joseph. "One, as a normal set; two, they took this whole corridor and turned it on its side so it's like a 90-degree hallway that we were shooting on; and they would take the camera, shoot them up and we would be in video going down but because the camera's doing that way it looks like a normal corridor.

"Then there was the third version that spun. I remember one of the first mornings I ever had with Chris in LA. He showed me the model of this set that spun. Both he and Tom Hardboe (stunt coordinator on "Batman Begins" and "The Dark Knight") said it was going to be very hard and uncomfortable. I told them, 'You can happen to me doing this job. I promise you will never hear me complain once.'"

Joseph smiled, his eyes narrowing into slits, when he recounted Chris instructing Tom Hardy to get his promise "in writing, that Daniel has promise. You could ask Chris. I did not complain because it was actually fun ..."

There were a lot of techniques, Joseph revealed, on how he and his co-actors opposed weightless. "I did some of the stunts on wires. Some of it was from that set that rotates like degrees, and some from various leveraging mechanisms but all of it was practical. There was nothing digital about that scene or games which is one of the reasons why it is so compelling for audiences. It doesn't feel like a video game. It feels like real life," he said.

The former child actor explained that it took months to prepare and complete this sequence. He is the figure in a light source in an elevator shaft.

"The elevator shaft wasn't a real one, of course," he said. "Chris shoots a lot of his movies in this hangar where they used to build zeppelins back in World War I. There's actually a lot of Gotham City that's still there."

Chris, whom we also interviewed earlier, praised the actor's dedication. Joseph's steady rise amid a throng of acclaimed indie films got a big boost with the success of "Inception" and the buzz on the athletic grace he displays in his difficult scenes.

Hinds of the technical success of those action sequences, the filmmaker pointed out, "is due to Joe's commitment, physically. What took is very tough. We had very rigs that would hang him from eight feet in the air upside down, rig had to create fight scenes that were. A character sort of reverse dolly right of him by motorized cars. I would literally draw him around through rice discs ... more him up and down. For me, the thrill is was that pretty much everything is a completely different rig."

The 29-year-old will be seen next in "Wanderer," in which his long-haired, often shirtless stuntchest role is a complete turnaround from his clean-cut image in "Inception" and "5000 Days of Summer."

We are thrilled to hear that he is to remind to have a shot at walking again on the set of Gotham City this time to work as The Riddler to Christ "Batman 3." We hope Joseph gets the part.

E-mail the columnist at rsapajo@_55@yahoo.com

INCEPTION'S Joseph Gordon-Levitt in the much-talked about gravity-defying hotel corridor scene

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

Power couple on the brink of a breakup

By the Entertainment staff

TROUBLE in paradise—and so soon after a splashy high-profile romance!

Bollywood finds it confronted with dreary events. Raving surfaced a major uneven set-back. GG has been letting the weekends go past.

"He's a virtual recluse," complained Jill, who's always been a social climber. "I need to be seen in public. I miss working girl."

Media report that Jill has been avoiding GG's company opening to sleep in her pad.

Is this the real for this fairy-tale power couple?

Phone wars

We've heard of "phone sex," how about phone wars? Pretty Starlet calls different women, but not to make sex, whenever she suspects her Handsome boyfriend is fooling around.

Since PS is notorious for his party-month, the women are constrained enough to stay away from DR. One of PS' victims is Bill's Screen Partner, a favorite of network bosses. The latest is budding Starlet, who is related to Action Superstar.

Perhaps PS doesn't expect what Bill and now with hapless women who are wowed by her boss when she's not looking.

Reality vamp

Former lovers are burning down Reality Views, who has given new meaning to the phrase, "kiss and tell," blabbing about the bedroom secrets—and hygienic problems—of some of the hottest hunks.

Of course her ex-bedpartners are apart. Ex-fiancé Manicure Idol, Reality Stud and Popular Hunk. She said PH had body odor and bad breath.

Spin doctors won't do

Major Network reportedly hired a troop of publicists to rehabilitate Controversial Star's less-than-pristine image.

At the launch of CS' big project, publicists and executives were given to her PRs. CS guests of interviews only to the chosen few, excluding all others.

Point to ponder: Given CS' bad, bad press, what this one needs are not spin doctors but witch doctors. Or exorcists.

Kuya Kim's update

Kuya Kim Atienza is recovering from a mild stroke suffered last Wednesday according to manager Thad Nieto. Because of the health scare, Kuya Kim has vowed to work less, relax more, and forego the six-and-three hats-to-discussion deal with Mama Pinto still not be affected by the crisis: "He told some had to 25 shows on his mind." No comment, guy!

What's up, Kapuso?

What's up with GMA 7 giving Willie Revillame previous time on Friday's "24 Oras"? The impression it made, truth to tell, is that the Kapuso network is considering signing up the ex-mobster-ex-Kapamilya TV host.

Rather that dog, loyal managers first think not bet. Willie joining 7, we're announced in interview tonight with Pia Guanio. So, wait, to stay away from Bill. One of PS' victims is Bill's Screen Partner, a favorite of network bosses. The latest is budding Starlet, who is related to Action Superstar.

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So we held up this section's front page so we waited for the awaited big reveal. Finally, "24 Oras" runs this. One of the reasons was about Willie, "nangarata ang mga ito."

Sigh.

Binay's side

Meanwhile, Mayor Junjun Binay sat down with TV5's "Bagong Araw," to address those pesky rumors about him and Kris Aquino. Let us guess what he said in the taped exclusive interview, airing today: she's still grieving his exit, Kris is just token friend ... it doesn't take a seer.

Crucial timing

Is it coincidental that Kris Aquino filed for the nullity of her marriage to James Yap in the week of the Leo awards, which honored her estranged hubby as Most Valuable Player in the PBA?

Isn't it serendipitous that the case was filed only a week, giving weekend chatter about an ailing mother enough time to do follow-up stories? Watch and learn!

Showbiz insider believes the case was filed at last, after so much dilly-dallying, to silence Yap's camp ... especially after the earlier damaging interview of Yap's mom on "Showbiz Central" last Sunday.

The virtual gag order goes two ways. Aquino has been advised by lawyers not to make further comments, since the case is already in the court. Yap has decided to zip it, too, according to manager Gordon Mamaradlo.

Then again, big-dedicated his MVP trophy to Baby James, and stopped just short of mentioning his ex-wife.

Pls D on TV5

Dina Bonnevie is the latest star to sign up with TV5.

She stars with Richard Gomez on the show "My Driver, Karen Loves," directed by Jose Quiroz and premiering next month.

A note says Miss D has joined the Kapatid channel on a "per project basis."

Feedback

From our feedback of the week, unsigned (but we have your phone number!): "Sorna I shld ini Ethan Bustos! smsdi i k wthd Mr. Voiceo d' sho. Insare wasnt and up a single installment of showbiz ish Benny Mendelsohn Melinda."

Priority project

Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto of Batangas supports a project of the Ateneo Lakas Foundation that provides skills training and livelihood programs for out-of-school youths. Go, Ate!

Foodie as cook

Lea Salonga, a self-confessed foodie, is also an aspiring cook. The internationally acclaimed Pinay singer becomes Entertainment columnist and endorser for Beauty Fresh chicken, describes herself as such in the brochure: "I make sure every dish I make is free of—from ingredients to equipment, down to what I will wear." She's kidding, right?

Vegas, baby!

SACRAMENTO, California—How a Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger billeting some luxurious budget requirements? Nagsa, baby!

Schwarzenegger said "Hasta la vista" as he, his wife Maria Shriver and his son Patrick, jetting off to Las Vegas to help friend Sylvester Stallone promote his new action flick, "The Expend-

(more on page 11)

KRIS Aquino shows it ... at last.

WILLIE: What's up with Kapuso?

DINA B: Newest Kapatid.

Sunday Crossword

PREMIER CROSSWORD / By Frank A. Longo

DETERRING A DREADED DROP

answers on page F11